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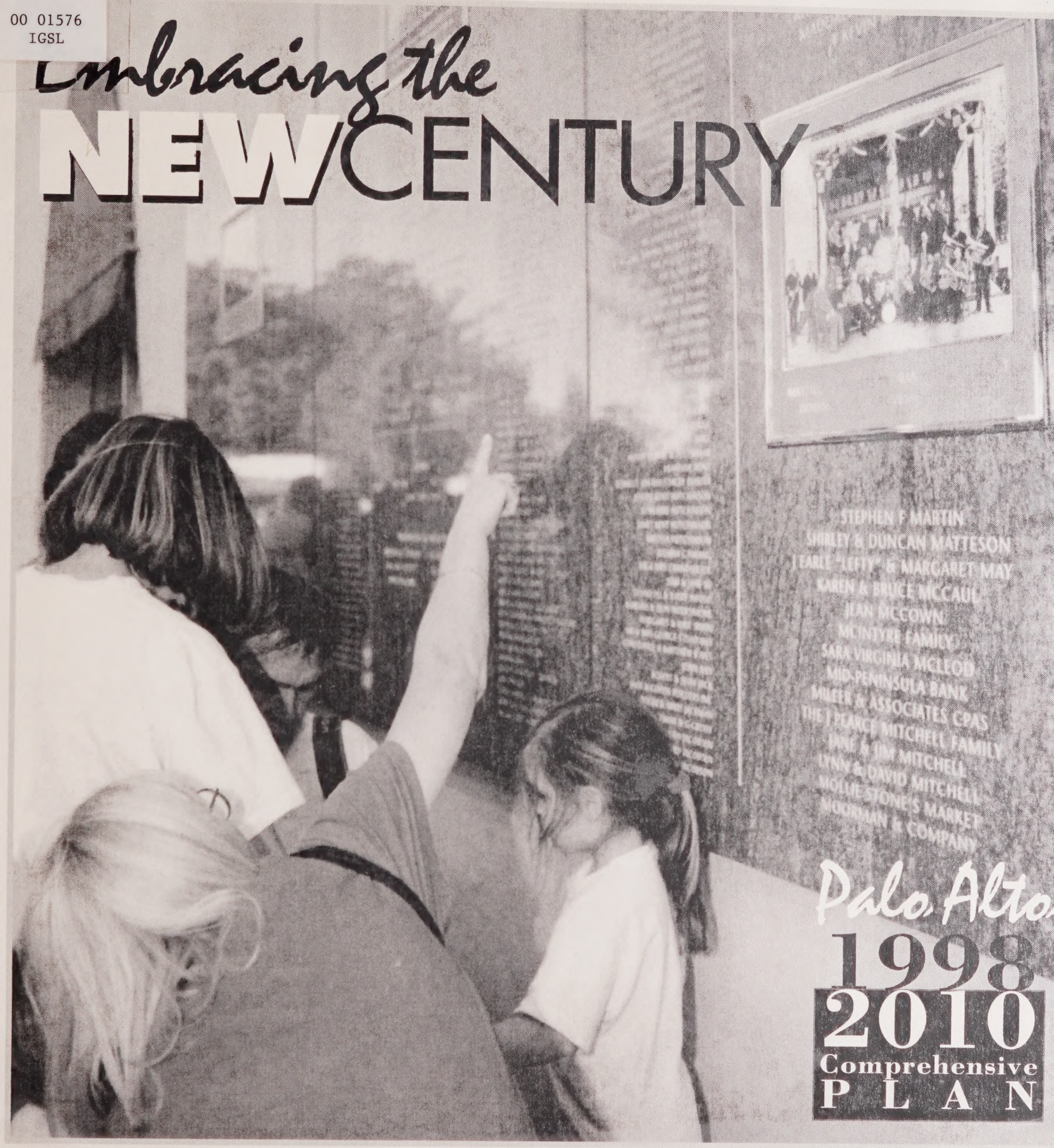
Embracing the NEW CENTURY



Palo Alto

1998 2010 Comprehensive PLAN

The City of Palo Alto
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS.

This map displays land use designations for land within the city limits as well as the Sphere of Influence and Planning Area.

- Single Family Residential
- Multiple Family Residential
- Village Residential
- Transit Oriented Residential
- Mixed Use/ Coordinated Area Plan (CAP)
- Regional/ Community Commercial
- Service Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Commercial Hotel
- Commercial Hotel Overlay
- Research/ Office Park
- Light Industrial
- Public Parks
- School District Lands
- Major Institution/ Special Facilities
- Open Space/ Controlled Development
- Publicly Owned Conservation Land
- Streamside Open Space
- Major Institution/University Lands/Academic Reserve & Open Space
- Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Educational Facilities
- Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Single Family
- Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Multiple Family
- Lakes
- Creeks
- Railroad Tracks
- Multi-modal Transit Station
- Jurisdictional Boundary Lines
- Freeways, Expressways, Arterial & Residential Arterial Streets
- Collector Streets and Local Streets

Revisions *(since mass publication of Land Use Designation Map with Comprehensive Plan in 1998)*

Edit Date:	Location:	Description:	Effective:	Res. No:
Oct. 2002	801 & 1101 Welch Road	From Research/Office Park to Major Institution/Special Facilities	Aug. 2000	7987
May 2003	2300 E. Bayshore	From Service Commercial to Research/Office Park	June 2003	8287
July 2003	Sarah Wallis & Terman Parks	Correction to existing cartographic error: changed color (to green for "Public Park")	na	na
Dec 2003	SOFA (South of Forest Area)	Update Land Use Designations per SOFA Coordinated Area Plan	Dec 2003	8349
Dec 2003	Legend	Added Coordinated Area Plan Area (CAPs) to land use designations represented by brownish color that also represents mixed use	Dec 2003	na

0' 2000' 4000'

Land Use and Circulation

This document is a graphic representation only of best available sources. The City of Palo Alto assumes no responsibility for any errors.

00 01576

Embracing the NEW CENTURY

Palo Alto

1998 2010

Comprehensive PLAN

Adopted by the Palo Alto City Council on July 20, 1998

Resolution No. 7780

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Cover Photo:

In 1994, Palo Altans celebrated their city's 100th birthday. The cover photo shows two generations of citizens enjoying the festivities and finding their family's name on the beautiful Centennial Wall located across the street from the City Hall Plaza. Commissioned for the event, this wall commemorates Palo Alto's first century as we embrace the new century.

World Wide Web Version

This document will soon be available on the City of Palo Alto's Web Site;
the city's homepage address is http://www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/homepage.html

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1 Introduction

Each of us has a vision of what Palo Alto should be like in the future. Although our visions are different, they share common qualities. We aspire to create a safe, beautiful City for ourselves, our children, and future generations. We envision a City with diverse housing opportunities, where the natural environment is protected, where excellent services are provided, and where citizens have a say in government. We aspire to create a City that is economically healthy and a good place to do business.

The Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan strives to build a coherent vision of the City's future from the visions of a diverse population. It integrates the aspirations of the City's residents, businesses, neighborhoods, and officials into a bold strategy for managing change.

The Comprehensive Plan is the primary tool for guiding the future development of the City. On a daily basis the City is faced with tough choices about growth, housing, transportation, neighborhood improvement, and service delivery. A Comprehensive Plan provides a guide for making these choices by describing long-term goals for the City's future as well as policies to guide day-to-day decisions.

Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

The Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan contains the City's official policies on land use and community design, transportation, housing, natural environment, business and economics, and community services. Its policies apply to both public and private properties. Its focus is on the physical form of the City.

The Plan is used by the City Council and Planning Commission to evaluate land use changes and to make funding and budget decisions. It is used by City Staff to regulate building and development and to make recommendations on projects. It is used by citizens and neighborhood groups to understand the City's long-range plans and proposals for different geographic areas. The Plan provides the basis for the City's development regulations and the foundation for its capital improvements program.

The Comprehensive Plan is a legal document and must meet specific State requirements for content. State law establishes the topics that must be addressed and the maps and diagrams the Plan must contain. The Plan must be comprehensive, long-range, and internally consistent. Its policies apply to all property within Palo Alto's "sphere of influence," a boundary that includes all land within the City limits, Stanford University and other property in unincorporated Santa Clara County. Although the County is not obligated to comply with the Plan in the unincorporated area, mutual cooperation provides benefits to the City, County, and University.

Major Themes of the Comprehensive Plan

The Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan has seven major themes, summarized here.

Building Community and Neighborhoods

Palo Alto's diverse neighborhoods are the building blocks of the community. Schools, libraries, parks, public facilities and small businesses are an essential part of neighborhood life and help build the bridge between neighborhood and community. The City is committed to building upon the strengths of its neighborhoods, keeping them safe and attractive, maintaining a distinct identity for each, and delivering top-quality community services to all residents.

Maintaining and Enhancing Community Character

The community treasures the special qualities of the City, including its historic buildings, pedestrian scale, high-quality architecture, and beautiful streets and parks. Maintaining the physical qualities of the City is an overarching consideration, incorporated in all parts of the Plan. The Land Use and Community Design Element includes specific provisions to maintain Palo Alto's best features and enhance and improve those areas where these features are lacking.

Reducing Reliance on the Automobile

The Plan provides new policies and specific actions for reducing the impacts of cars on the environment and improving options for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit-users. In the future, a greater emphasis will be placed on improving the City's multi-modal transit stations. New light rail, shuttle bus, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities are envisioned. The City will strive to create a development pattern where people can walk, bicycle or take public transit rather than drive.

Meeting Housing Supply Challenges

Palo Alto is perceived as a built-out city. Increasing the housing supply and maintaining the diversity and quality of Palo Alto's housing stock are challenges. This Comprehensive Plan seeks to meet these challenges by increasing the supply of housing at all price levels. The plan safeguards existing single family neighborhoods and rental housing. It proposes new map designations where higher densities are allowed in appropriate locations and new policies to ensure that the remaining housing sites are used efficiently.

Protecting and Repairing Natural Features

With most of the baylands and foothills already protected as permanent open space, the Comprehensive Plan's focus turns inward to the fragile ecosystems within developed portions of the City. The City's creeks, many of which have been altered by flood control projects, are envisioned as greenbelts and community gateways. A pilot project in urban creek restoration is identified. The Plan also emphasizes the benefits of street trees and promotes an urban forest throughout the City.

Meeting Residential and Commercial Needs

Palo Alto is well known as a desirable residential community and a City with a healthy, competitive business community. Meeting the demands of each community is a major theme of the Plan. The Plan establishes the physical boundaries of residential and commercial areas and sets limits where necessary to ensure that business and housing remain compatible. It encourages commercial enterprise, but not at the expense of the City's residential neighborhoods. The City is committed to retaining existing businesses, maintaining vital commercial areas, and attracting quality new businesses.

Providing Responsive Governance and Regional Leadership

The Plan emphasizes the City's commitment to strong community participation. It encourages collaboration among citizens, businesses, and local officials. It affirms Palo Alto's role as a leader in addressing regional issues.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Use and Organization of the Plan

Palo Alto's Comprehensive Plan is to be used by all members of the community, as well as any other person or organization interested in the future of the City. The hundreds of citizens and officials who have prepared the Plan hope you will find it a useful, easy-to-read document.

A key concept in the Plan is the idea of a Vision for Palo Alto — a shared dream of Palo Alto in the future. A vision is not a binding goal, and in fact may not be achievable in the lifetime of those participating in drafting the Comprehensive Plan, or even the next generation. However, the long-term idealistic thinking embodied in each vision statement was the foundation of the development of the Plan.

State law requires that local plans contain seven mandatory sections, or "elements." The State provides considerable flexibility in how these elements are organized. The table at left shows the State-mandated elements and their counterparts in the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan.

State-Mandated Element	Corresponding Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Element
• Land Use	• Land Use & Community Design
• Circulation	• Transportation
• Housing	• Housing
• Open Space • Conservation • Safety • Noise	• Natural Environment
	• Business & Economics
	• Community Services & Facilities

Palo Alto's Plan departs from the structure suggested by the State in a number of ways. The scope of the Land Use Element has been broadened to address community design. The Natural Environment Element incorporates open space, conservation, public safety and noise. The Plan also includes a Business and Economics Element and a Community Services and Facilities Element. Although these two elements address topics that are not required by State law, the issues they address are fundamental to the future quality of life in Palo Alto. Once adopted, the optional elements have the same legal status as the mandatory elements. No single element or subject supersedes any other.

The Elements of the Plan share a common format and use similar terms and references. Each Element contains background information on specific subjects to make the Comprehensive Plan more useful as a reference document and to provide the technical basis for its policies and programs. Each Element contains maps that provide current information about the City, or graphic illustrations of the City's policies for specific geographic areas, or the major proposals for transportation, public facilities and environmental protection.

Each Element includes goals, policies and programs that are the essence of the Plan and are to be consulted to guide decisions on a wide range of issues. As you use this Comprehensive Plan, keep in mind that the goals, policies and programs are just as important as the maps in making land use and development decisions. To be consistent with the Plan, a project must not only be permitted on the Land Use and Circulation Map, it must also meet the intent of the Plan's policies. The meaning of goals, policies and programs is described below.

A Goal is a general end towards which the City will direct effort.

A Policy is a specific statement of principle or of guiding actions that implies clear commitment but is not mandatory. A general direction that a governmental agency sets to follow, in order to meet its goals and objectives before undertaking an action program.

A Program is an action, activity, or strategy carried out in response to an adopted policy to achieve a specific goal or objective.

Other Components of the Plan

The **Land Use and Circulation Map** is included by reference as a part of this document. It is probably the most familiar part of the Plan and identifies land use designations for each property in the City. The type of development allowed within each designation shown on the Map is described in the Land Use and Community Design Element.

The Plan includes a **Governance Chapter** intended to provide guidance to citizens and community groups participating in the planning process. The Governance Chapter is a vehicle for implementation rather than a Plan element and is, therefore, not subject to the State requirements for consistency and comprehensiveness.

The Plan also includes an **Implementation Chapter** that identifies specific actions to be taken to carry out the Plan. For each action, the timing, funding, and responsible agency or department is identified. Like Governance, the Implementation Chapter is not a Plan Element, but is intended as a description of the steps to be taken in order to achieve the Plan's goals.

In the **Appendix** is the Housing Element Technical Document, which contains detailed information on the City's housing programs.

A **Glossary** and **Index** are provided for reference.

An **Environmental Impact Report** (EIR) has been prepared for this Plan and is contained in a separate document. The EIR evaluates the effects of the Plan's policies and programs on Palo Alto's environment. It identifies where more detailed environmental analysis may be required as specific projects are proposed in the future.

How the Comprehensive Plan Was Developed

The Comprehensive Plan is the product of an over five-year effort that involved hundreds of Palo Alto residents and other interested parties. Early in this effort, the City Council appointed a 38 member Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) made up of 28 community members, 10 alternates and nine representatives of boards and commissions. A professional facilitation firm was retained to direct the CPAC's work and lead other aspects of public involvement. Additional consultants were utilized to provide expertise in the areas of the environment, traffic, noise, air quality, geotechnical conditions, cultural resources, biology, urban design, graphic design and editing.

The CPAC developed the Vision Statements and prepared the draft Goals, Policies and Programs based on a series of meetings, newsletters, educational forums, telephone surveys, video "Outreach Kits" and weekend workshops, as well as hearings before City Boards and Commissions including the Planning Commission and City Council. The document itself was written by synthesizing the extensive public input, including more than 1,000 directives, ranging from broad visions for the City's future to detailed programs for specific sites. These were refined and reorganized to establish a cohesive planning document. These directives have been supplemented with maps, text and graphics to create a plan that articulates the City's aspirations and expectations for the future.

The public participation process for this Comprehensive Plan received the 1995 SAVVY Award for best Community Visioning process from the City-County Communications and Marketing Association (3CMA).

Implementing the Plan

The Comprehensive Plan will be implemented through the actions of City Staff, the Planning Commission, other Boards and Commissions and the City Council. Plan policies will be carried out through the adoption and revision of ordinances like the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, through annual budgeting and capital improvement programming, through the empowerment of neighborhood and community groups, and through on-going decisions on future development proposals.

Long-range planning in Palo Alto does not end with the adoption of this document. It is important to continue the steps necessary to bring forth the vision of the Plan. The Plan is intended to be a living document, to grow and change as local conditions change. In fact, the Palo Alto Municipal Code requires the Planning Commission to review the Comprehensive Plan annually and recommend to the City Council any modifications that it considers necessary.

It may, at times, be necessary to amend the Plan. While most amendments change the land use designation of a particular property, any part of the Plan may be amended as circumstances change. Amendments may be initiated by property owners, the Planning Commission, the City Council, or City staff. All amendments require public hearings by the Planning Commission and City Council and evaluation of the environmental impacts in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Only through continuing to use, evaluate and amend the Plan can Palo Alto reach towards the vision sought by all the dedicated people who contributed to the development of the Plan.

2 Land Use and Community Design

Vision Statement

Palo Alto will be a vital, attractive place to live, work, and visit. The elements that make Palo Alto a great community—its neighborhoods, shopping and employment centers, civic uses, open spaces, and natural resources—will be strengthened and enhanced. The diverse range of housing and work environments will be sustained and expanded to create more choices for all income levels. All Palo Alto neighborhoods will be improved, each to have public gathering spaces, essential services and pedestrian amenities, to encourage less reliance on the automobile.

Introduction

The relationship between land use, urban design, transportation, and economics are emphasized in the Land Use and Community Design Element. While the 1980-1995 Comprehensive Plan addressed urban design as a separate Plan Element, this Plan recognizes that the design of buildings and surrounding spaces cannot be separated from land use decisions. Urban design considerations appear throughout the Element. The Element also recognizes that land use decisions must be closely integrated with transportation and economic decisions. This is reflected in the Element's focus on the physical linkages between different parts of the City and the future role of the City's business centers.

The Land Use and Community Design Element provides a "constitution" for the development of public and private property. It begins by describing the context in which local planning decisions are made, and proceeds with goals, policies, and programs covering a broad range of growth and development topics. The goals, policies and programs are organized into three major sections. The first section—Local Land Use and Growth Management—establishes the limits to urban growth and sets the direction for maintaining the City's scale and character. The second section—City Structure—presents a new conceptual structure for Palo Alto, organizing the City into Residential Neighborhoods, Centers, and Employment Districts. This section focuses on the way these areas are connected to each other and includes policies and programs for specific geographic areas of the City. The third section—Design of Buildings and Public Spaces—addresses citywide urban design issues, including historic preservation and the design of buildings, civic uses, public ways, public art, and infrastructure.

This Element meets the State-mandated requirements for a Land Use Element. It defines the City's land use categories and includes the proposed Land Use and Circulation Map guiding the development of each property in the City. Four new land use categories—Mixed Use, Transit-Oriented Residential, Village Residential, and Commercial Hotel—have been added since the previous Comprehensive Plan.

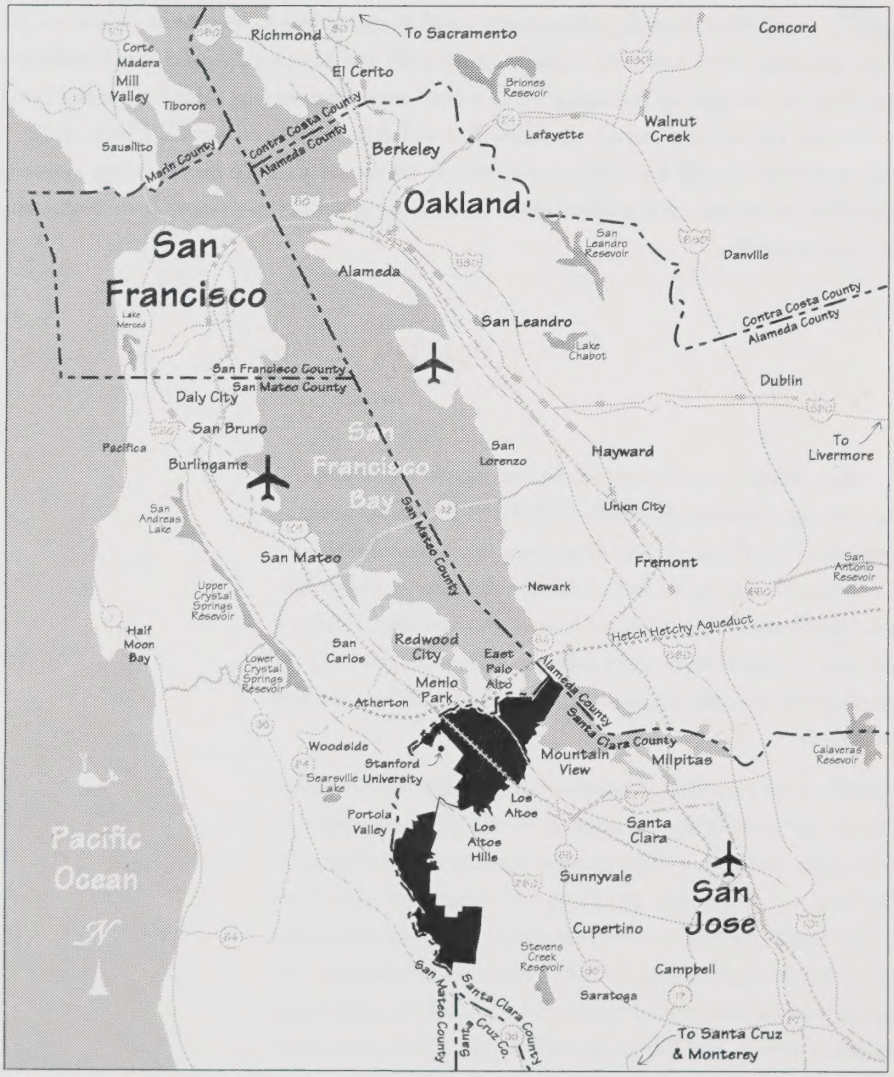
See Map L-1 for an aerial view of Palo Alto and its environs

Planning Context

Palo Alto's Role Within the Region

See Map L-2 showing Palo Alto's Sphere of Influence and Urban Service Area

Palo Alto is located in the northern part of Santa Clara County, in the portion of the Bay Area known as the Mid-Peninsula. The City shares a boundary with San Mateo County and six cities. Through time, Palo Alto has maintained close and collaborative relationships with adjoining counties and cities. Its officials and citizens have maintained a tradition of leadership in land use, transportation, and environmental planning efforts, both at the local and regional level. These efforts have yielded policies for controlling and managing the region's growth, protecting open space, and conserving natural resources.



Palo Alto, shown in black, has a tradition of collaborating with neighboring cities and counties in the Bay Area. The City has taken an active role in addressing regional planning issues.

Santa Clara County is projected to add more than 233,000 new residents by the year 2010. San Mateo County will add approximately 50,000 residents by the same year. Although only a small portion of this growth will be in Palo Alto, the City is not insulated from the challenges of an increasing population. These challenges can only be faced through cooperative regional planning. Palo Alto will continue to be a partner in this process. The City has long supported Santa Clara County's General Plan provisions for an "Urban Service Area" to manage urban growth and limit sprawl, as well as the County's concept of "compact development." The City's Plan will help realize the broader County goal of directing growth to appropriate locations within the urban area, particularly along transit corridors and near employment centers.

In the 1990s, Palo Alto has worked with neighboring East Palo Alto and Menlo Park on common issues and matters of mutual interest. The three cities participate in a variety of shared economic development, social service, education, public safety, and housing programs. Palo Alto participates with Mountain View, Los Altos, and Los Altos Hills in many ways, including fire protection and operation of the Regional Water Quality Control Plant. The City also is an active player in the County's Congestion Management Program.

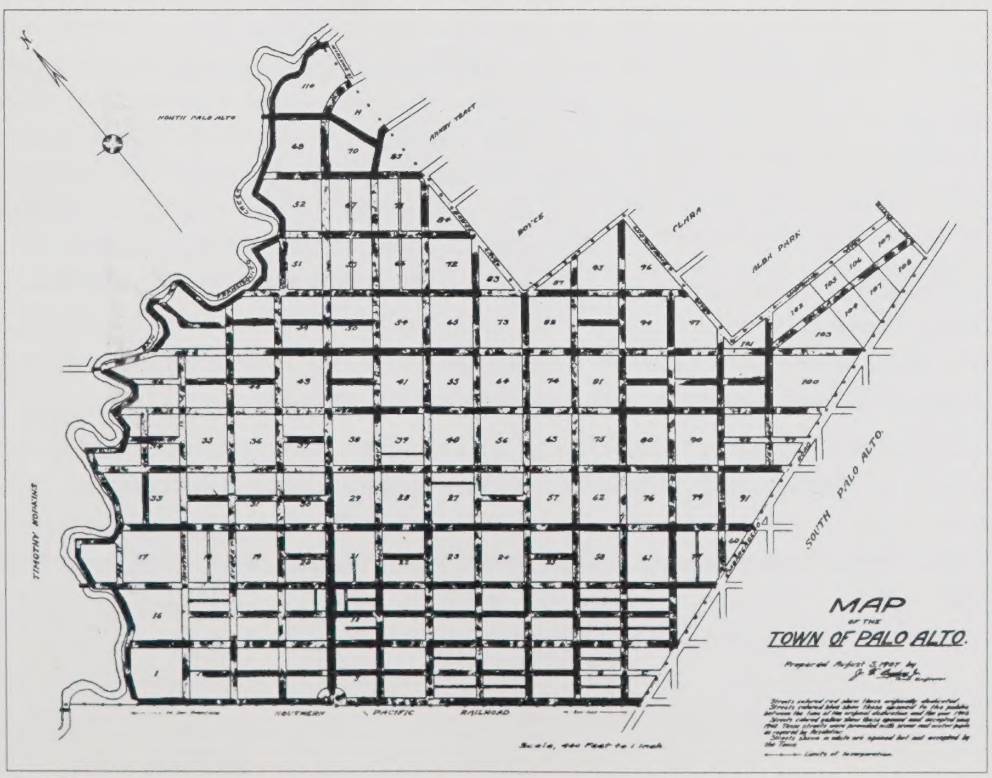
Some of the most significant opportunities for growth and change in the Palo Alto area are on Stanford University lands. Although the campus itself lies outside the City limits, most of the University's income-producing lands are within Palo Alto. Stanford owns land outside of Palo Alto as well, extending into unincorporated Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. The community values the open space amenities afforded by this land but also recognizes the right of the University in using its properties for academic purposes. Agreements about development on unincorporated Stanford lands are captured in an inter-jurisdictional agreement between Stanford, Palo Alto and Santa Clara County. In general, the University supports the concept of compact development and prefers that its future expansion be contained within the current limits of development on the Stanford Campus.

See Map L-3 showing Stanford University lands within Palo Alto and other jurisdictions

The relationship between the City and the University has always been complex and even tense at times. However, there have always been mutual benefits. In recent land use and transportation planning efforts, Palo Alto and Stanford have worked together to plan for the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area and explore options for expanding the University's Marguerite Shuttle Bus within the City. These ventures hold promise for the future and will continue to be pursued.

Evolution of the City

A university town from the beginning, Palo Alto was incorporated in 1894 on lands purchased and subdivided by Timothy Hopkins. Hopkins, a friend of Leland Stanford, planned the town to serve the newly established Stanford University. The City grew to many times its original size



The original Hopkins Tract, also known as University Park, was proclaimed a local Heritage District during Palo Alto's 1994 Centennial.

over the next century as land to the south and east was annexed. The town was originally centered around the commercial district along University Avenue. Although this area remains Palo Alto's central business district, the geographic center of the City has shifted several miles south.

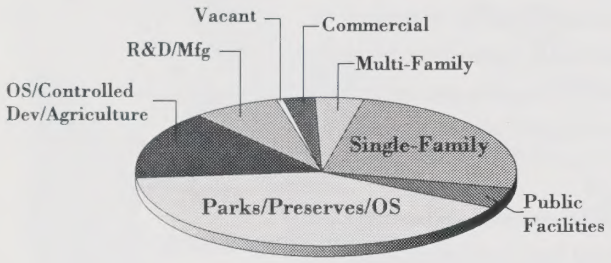
The town of Mayfield, about 1-1/2 miles southeast of University Avenue, predated the founding of Palo Alto by 40 years. Mayfield continued to develop as a separate town until its annexation to Palo Alto in 1925. Its main commercial street, California Avenue, became a second business district for the City as the land between Mayfield and University Avenue was developed. Today, California Avenue is an active retail and commercial center that retains its small town ambience. Its role as a transit hub and its close proximity to Stanford Research Park give the area citywide significance and will continue to influence its character in the future.

Palo Alto saw its greatest expansion during the decade following World War II. The City boundary was expanded south to Mountain View and the City's residential land area virtually doubled. New neighborhood shopping centers like Alma Plaza and Midtown were developed to serve the growing population. This period of expansion coincided with the transformation of the City from a "college town" to a world leader in high technology. Most of the City's office, research, and light industrial areas were annexed during the 1950s, including Stanford Research Park, Embarcadero Road northeast of Bayshore, and the West Bayshore/San Antonio Road area. The Stanford Shopping Center was incorporated into the City in 1953.

A major portion of Palo Alto—most of it undeveloped—lies west of Foothill Expressway. This area was annexed between 1959 and 1968 and is mostly zoned for open space. Elsewhere, small pockets of residential development were gradually annexed into the City during the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, closing the borders with Mountain View and Los Altos. The City's last significant expansions were annexation of the Barron Park neighborhood in 1975 and a large tract of marshland open space in the baylands in 1979. With adoption of the Baylands Master Plan in 1978, urban uses were limited to approximately 200 acres of existing development along Embarcadero Road and East Bayshore Road. The remaining 1,700 acres were dedicated for recreation and restoration of marshland wildlife habitat.

Today, Palo Alto comprises 16,627 acres, or about 26 square miles. Approximately 40 percent of this area is in parks and preserves and another 15 percent consists of agriculture and other open space uses. The remaining area is nearly completely developed, with single family uses predominating. Less than one percent of the City's land area consists of vacant, developable land.

Land Use Distribution



Parks/Preserves/ Open Space – 40.5%

Single Family – 25%

Open Space/Controlled Development/Agriculture – 15%

Research & Development/ Limited Manufacturing – 7.5%

Public Facilities – 4.5%

Multiple Family – 4%

Commercial – 3%

Vacant – .5%

Source: The Palo Alto Planning Division (1996)

Over half of Palo Alto's land area is designated as parks or open space. About one-fourth of the City consists of single family residences.

Local Land Use and Growth Management

Goal L-1: A Well-designed, Compact City, Providing Residents and Visitors with Attractive Neighborhoods, Work Places, Shopping Districts, Public Facilities, and Open Spaces.

The amount of urban land in Palo Alto in 2010 will remain essentially the same as it is today, with growth occurring through infill and redevelopment. In a community survey conducted during the Comprehensive Plan process, the community overwhelmingly reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of the baylands and foothills. The emphasis on infill brings opportunities for positive change but also the need to protect the qualities that are important to Palo Alto.

Extent of Urban Development

Policy L-1:

Continue current City policy limiting future urban development to currently developed lands within the urban service area. The boundary of the urban service area is otherwise known as the urban growth boundary. Retain undeveloped land west of Foothill Expressway and Junipero Serra as open space, with allowances made for very low-intensity development consistent with the open space character of the area. Retain undeveloped Baylands northeast of Highway 101 as open space.

This is a continuation of existing City policy. Any future expansion of the Stanford Research Park will be in the form of infill development rather than expansion. The City's Urban Service Area boundary identifies areas that may be developed during the term of this Plan.

Policy L-2:

Maintain an active cooperative working relationship with Santa Clara County and Stanford University regarding land use issues.

Development Limitations on Unincorporated Stanford Lands

A 1985, three-party interjurisdictional agreement with the City, Santa Clara County and Stanford University, identifies the land use polices for lands owned by Stanford and located within unincorporated Santa Clara County. Stanford's General Use Permit, issued by Santa Clara County, establishes building area, population limits and some mitigation measures for development of the unincorporated lands; and, identifies four sub-areas with special land use controls (See Map L-3). The special area limitations are:

Area A (Campus frontage along El Camino Real): No development.

Area B (South of Sand Hill Road between Pasteur Drive and Junipero Serra Boulevard): Until 2021 limited to academic and recreation fields and related support facilities. Faculty, staff or student housing may be proposed in a portion along Campus Drive West.

Area C (West of Junipero Serra between Alpine Road and Deer Creek): Low-intensity academic uses that are compatible with the open space qualities of the area. Development of any structure over 5,000 square feet requires a use permit from the County. Development for income producing purposes, or sale or lease for nonacademic purposes, would require annexation to the City.

Area D (Arboretum area along Palm Drive and the Oval): No development.

See also Goal N-1 and associated policies and programs

See Map L-2 for the Urban Service Area boundary and the Urban Growth boundary

See Land Use Map L-3: Stanford Lands

See Santa Clara County General Plan Policies R-LU68 and R-LU69 regarding Academic Reserve and Open Space designation

See Santa Clara County General Plan Policies C-GD1, C-GD2, R-GD2 and R-GD6 regarding development in rural unincorporated areas

See Santa Clara County General Plan Policies U-ST1 through U-ST 10 regarding county regulation of Stanford lands

PROGRAM L-1:

Maintain and update as appropriate the 1985 Land Use Policies Agreement that sets forth the land use policies of the City, Santa Clara County and Stanford University with regard to Stanford unincorporated lands.

PROGRAM L-2:

City staff will monitor Stanford development proposals and traffic conditions within the Sand Hill Road Corridor and annually report to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Maintain and Strengthen City Character

POLICY L-3:

Guide development to respect views of the foothills and East Bay hills from public streets in the developed portions of the City.

See Map L-4 for locations of major view corridors and viewsheds

Palo Alto's backdrop of forested hills to the southwest and San Francisco Bay to the northeast is a character-defining element of the City. Views of the hills can be seen from many City streets. They provide a sense of enclosure and a reminder of the City's proximity to open space and the natural environment. Views from the baylands are equally striking, taking in the Bay, the East Bay hills, and the Santa Cruz Mountains. These visual connections are part of what makes Palo Alto attractive. The design and siting of new buildings should take into account impact on views, and should frame existing views of the hills, where possible.

POLICY L-4:

Maintain Palo Alto's varied residential neighborhoods while sustaining the vitality of its commercial areas and public facilities. Use the Zoning Ordinance as a tool to enhance Palo Alto's desirable qualities.

The City's neighborhoods are varied in character and architectural style, reflecting the stages of the City's development as well as the range of incomes and tastes of its residents.

POLICY L-5:

Maintain the scale and character of the City. Avoid land uses that are overwhelming and unacceptable due to their size and scale.

The traditional form and scale in much of Palo Alto contributes to the City's reputation as a desirable place to live and work.

Scale is the relationship of various parts of the environment to each other, to people, and to the limits of perception. It is what establishes some neighborhoods or streets as pedestrian-oriented and others as automobile-oriented. In older portions of Palo Alto, the grid of City blocks, small rectangular parcels, and narrow streets establishes a pattern that is generally pleasant for the pedestrian. The pattern is reinforced by streets that are lined with trees, residential buildings set back behind front gardens, and buildings typically one to three stories in height. In the newer portions of Palo Alto—those areas built after 1950—street patterns and building placement are oriented primarily to the automobile user. In the newer commercial areas, buildings are usually set behind parking lots located along the street, and landscaping sometimes provides a visual buffer for the motorist.

PROGRAM L-3:

Maintain and periodically review height and density limits to discourage single uses that are inappropriate in size and scale to the surrounding uses.

The Citywide fifty foot height limit has been respected in all new development since it was adopted in the 1970's. Only a few exceptions have been granted for architectural enhancements or seismic safety retrofits to noncomplying buildings.

POLICY L-6:

Where possible, avoid abrupt changes in scale and density between residential and non-residential areas and between residential areas of different densities. To promote compatibility and gradual transitions between land uses, place zoning district boundaries at mid-block locations rather than along streets wherever possible.

PROGRAM L-4:

Review and change zoning regulations to promote gradual transitions in the scale of development where residential districts abut more intense uses.

PROGRAM L-5:

Establish new performance and architectural standards that minimize negative impacts where land use transitions occur.

PROGRAM L-6:

Revise the City's Neighborhood Commercial (CN) and Service Commercial (CS) zoning requirements to better address land use transitions.

Since CN and CS zones are frequently located next to residential areas, development standards are particularly important to ensure compatibility and reduce negative impacts on adjacent land uses.

POLICY L-7:

Evaluate changes in land use in the context of regional needs, overall City welfare and objectives, as well as the desires of surrounding neighborhoods.

Commercial Growth Limits

POLICY L-8:

Maintain a limit of 3,257,900 square feet of new non-residential development for the nine planning areas evaluated in the 1989 Citywide Land Use and Transportation Study, with the understanding that the City Council may make modifications for specific properties that allow modest additional growth. Such additional growth will count towards the 3,257,900 maximum.

See Map L-6 showing commercial growth monitoring areas

Not only will the area devoted to urban development remain constant, but new non-residential growth from 1989 forward will be limited to just over 3.25 million square feet. The total

non-residential development in the city in 1996 is in the range of 25 million square feet. This amount of growth was determined by the Citywide 1989 Land Use and Transportation Study and was largely implemented through commercial downzoning. This growth limit will be observed citywide for the term of this Plan. Traffic will be monitored to ensure that the intent of the limit is being achieved, though it is recognized that traffic counts are affected by both residential and non-residential growth and also by auto use behavior.

PROGRAM L-7:

Establish a system to monitor the rate of non-residential development and traffic conditions related to both residential and non-residential development at key intersections including those identified in the 1989 Citywide Study and additional intersections identified in the Comprehensive Plan EIR. If the rate of growth reaches the point where the citywide development maximum might be reached, the City will reevaluate development policies and regulations.

PROGRAM L-8:

Limit new non-residential development in the Downtown area to 350,000 square feet, or 10 percent above the amount of development existing or approved as of May 1986. Reevaluate this limit when non-residential development approvals reach 235,000 square feet of floor area.

PROGRAM L-9:

Continue to monitor development, including the effectiveness of the ground floor retail requirement, in the University Avenue/Downtown area. Keep the Planning Commission and City Council advised of the findings on an annual basis.

Mixed Use Areas

See Goal L-7 and related Policies and Programs on Historic Character

POLICY L-9:

Enhance desirable characteristics in mixed use areas. Use the planning and zoning process to create opportunities for new mixed use development.

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that mixed use environments can be interesting and dynamic. A new mixed use land use classification has been created to encourage this type of development in the future. This represents a change from past attitudes that sought to separate different uses from each other as a means of protecting property values, public safety, and the quality of life. With proper guidance such concerns can be addressed, allowing a more vital urban environment to be created.

Parts of the South of Forest Area (SOFA) and the California Avenue/Ventura Area (Cal-Ventura) have an established pattern of mixed use, with service commercial, light industrial, and housing in both areas. Continued mixing of land uses is encouraged. These areas are among the few in the City that are well-suited for light industrial, automotive, and business support services. Many of these uses should be allowed to continue in the future, augmented by new development including multifamily housing. The proximity of these areas to transit and services makes them excellent locations for both housing and commercial uses.

PROGRAM L-10:

- ***Create and apply the following four new Mixed Use zoning standards: A "Live/Work" designation that permits individuals to live on the same site where they work by allowing housing and other uses such as office, retail, and light industrial to co-exist in the same building space; and "Retail/Office," "Residential/Retail," and "Residential/Office" designations that permit a mix of uses on the same site or nearby sites.***

"Mixed use" conditions exist now in the South of Forest Avenue (SOFA) area.

- ***Develop design standards for all mixed use designations providing for buildings with one to three stories, rear parking or underground parking, street-facing windows and entries, and zero setback along the street, except that front gardens may be provided for ground floor residential uses.***

These zoning designations and their accompanying design standards and performance requirements are proposed to provide a new form of mixed use development that results in a high quality environment with a strong pedestrian-oriented streetscape and minimal adverse impacts. All mixed use development must be an appropriate size and scale for the area and designed to enliven the street. Certain conditions and performance standards will be applied concerning such issues as noise, glare, air quality, traffic, parking and hazardous materials.

See also Policies L-25, L-29, and L-31 encouraging mixed use development

Land Use and Circulation Map

The Land Use and Circulation Map (included by reference as a part of this Plan) shows the intent of the Comprehensive Plan with regard to development, redevelopment, and preservation of public and private properties in the Palo Alto Planning Area. It expresses the Plan's goals, policies, and programs in map format. The "Planning Area" covered by the map includes all land within the City limits as well as some adjacent areas of Santa Clara County (including Stanford University and several parcels in the foothills) and two City-owned parcels in San Mateo County.

Because Palo Alto is a built out city, proposed land uses are generally consistent with existing uses and land use boundaries usually follow property lines. However, it is important to keep in mind that the Land Use and Circulation Map is not the same as the Zoning Map. For each land use category shown on the Diagram, there will be at least one zoning designation and usually more. For example, areas shown on the Diagram as "Single Family Residential" may be zoned RE (Residential Estate), R-1 (Single Family), or R-2 (Two-Family Residence). The Land Use and Circulation Map also depicts conditions envisioned in the Plan's horizon year of 2010, while the Zoning Map depicts the uses that are permitted today.

See Land Use Map

LAND USE DEFINITIONS

The following definitions correspond to the categories on the Land Use and Circulation Map. Each definition includes standards for density or intensity of use. For residential categories, densities are expressed in terms of persons per acre as well as housing units per acre. The number of persons per acre is based on the number of units multiplied by the 1990 average household size of 2.24 persons. The standards for population density are intended to be a planning guideline and are not intended to establish an absolute limit. In non-residential areas, intensity is expressed using "floor area ratios" or FAR. FAR is the ratio of building area to lot area on a site. The FAR standards are consistent with those contained in the City's Zoning Ordinance. They were initially established to estimate daytime population and employment in different parts of the City. In the definitions below, FARs represent an expectation of the overall intensity of future development. Actual FARs on individual sites will vary.

Open Space

Publicly Owned Conservation Land: Open lands whose primary purpose is the preservation and enhancement of the natural state of the land and its plants and animals. Only compatible resource management, recreation, and educational activities are allowed.

Public Park: Open lands whose primary purpose is active recreation and whose character is essentially urban. These areas have been planted with non-indigenous landscaping and require a concerted effort to maintain recreational facilities and landscaping.

Streamside Open Space: The corridor of riparian vegetation along a natural stream. Hiking, biking, and riding trails may be developed in the streamside open space. The corridor will generally vary in width up to 200 feet either side of the center line of the creek. However, along San Francisquito Creek between El Camino Real and the Sand Hill Road bridge over the creek, the open space corridor varies in width between approximately 80 and 310 feet from the center line of the creek. The aerial delineation of the open space in this segment of the corridor, as opposed to other segments of the corridor, is shown to approximate scale on the Proposed Land Use and Circulation Map.

Open Space/Controlled Development: Land having all the characteristics of open space but upon which some development may be allowed. Open space amenities must be retained in these areas. Residential densities range from 0.1 to 1 dwelling unit per acre but may rise to a maximum of 2 units per acre where second units are allowed, and population densities range from 1 to 4 persons per acre.

Residential

Single Family Residential: Includes one dwelling unit on each lot as well as conditional uses requiring permits such as churches and schools. Specific areas may be zoned to allow second units or duplexes where they would be compatible with neighborhood character and not create traffic and parking problems. The net density in single family areas will range from 1 to 7 units per acre, but may rise to a maximum of 14 units in areas where second units or duplexes are allowed. Population densities will range from 1 to 30 persons per acre.

Multiple Family Residential: The permitted number of housing units will vary by area, depending on existing land use, proximity to major streets and public transit, distance to shopping, and environmental problems. Net densities will range from 8 to 40 units and 8 to

90 persons per acre. Density should be on the lower end of the scale next to single family residential areas. Densities higher than what is permitted by zoning may be allowed where measurable community benefits will be derived, services and facilities are available, and the net effect will be compatible with the overall Comprehensive Plan.

Village Residential: Allows residential dwellings that are designed to contribute to the harmony and pedestrian orientation of a street or neighborhood. Housing types include single family houses on small lots, second units, cottage clusters, courtyard housing, duplexes, fourplexes, and small apartment buildings. Design standards will be prepared for each housing type to ensure that development successfully contributes to the street and neighborhood and minimizes potential negative impacts. Net densities will range up to 20 units per acre.

Transit-oriented Residential: Allows higher density residential dwellings in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue commercial centers within a walkable distance, approximately 2,000 feet, of the City's two multi-modal transit stations. The land use category is intended to generate residential densities that support substantial use of public transportation and especially the use of Caltrain. Design standards will be prepared to ensure that development successfully contributes to the street and minimizes potential negative impacts. Individual project performance standards will be developed, including parking, to ensure that a significant portion of the residents will use alternative modes of transportation. Net density will range up to 50 units per acre, with minimum densities to be considered during development of new City zoning regulations.

Commercial

Neighborhood Commercial: Includes shopping centers with off-street parking or a cluster of streetfront stores that serve the immediate neighborhood. Examples include Alma Plaza, Charleston Center, Edgewood Center, and Midtown. Typical uses include supermarkets, bakeries, drugstores, variety stores, barber shops, restaurants, self-service laundries, dry cleaners, and hardware stores. In some locations, residential and mixed use projects may also locate in this category. Non-residential floor area ratios will range up to 0.4.

Regional/Community Commercial: Larger shopping centers and districts that have wider variety goods and services than the neighborhood shopping areas. They rely on larger trade areas and include such uses as department stores, bookstores, furniture stores, toy stores, apparel shops, restaurants, theaters, and non-retail services such as offices and banks. Examples include Stanford Shopping Center, Town and Country Village, and University Avenue/Downtown. Non-residential floor area ratios range from 0.35 to 2.

Service Commercial: Facilities providing citywide and regional services and relying on customers arriving by car. These uses do not necessarily benefit from being in high volume pedestrian areas such as shopping centers or Downtown. Typical uses include auto services and dealerships, motels, lumberyards, appliance stores, and restaurants, including fast service types. In almost all cases, these uses require good automobile and service access so that customers can safely load and unload without impeding traffic. In some locations, residential and mixed use projects may be appropriate in this land use category. Examples of Service Commercial areas include San Antonio Road, El Camino Real, and Embarcadero Road northeast of the Bayshore Freeway. Non-residential floor area ratios will range up to 0.4.

Mixed Use: This category includes Live/Work, Retail/Office, Residential/Retail and Residential/Office development. Its purpose is to increase the types of spaces available for living and working to encourage a mix of compatible uses in certain areas, and to encourage the upgrading of certain areas with buildings designed to provide a high quality pedestrian-oriented street environment. Mixed Use may include permitted activities mixed within the same building or within separate buildings on the same site or on nearby sites. Live/Work refers to one or more individuals living in the same building where they earn their livelihood, usually in professional or light industrial activities. Retail/Office, Residential/Retail, and Residential/Office provide other variations to Mixed Use with Retail typically on the ground floor and Residential on upper floors. Design standards will be developed to ensure that development is compatible and contributes to the character of the street and neighborhood. Floor area ratios will range up to 1.15, although Residential/Retail and Residential/Office development located along transit corridors or near multi-modal centers will range up to 2.0 FAR with up to 3.0 FAR possible in areas resistant to revitalization. The FAR above 1.15 will be used for residential purposes.

Commercial Hotel: This category allows facilities for use by temporary overnight occupants on a transient basis, such as hotels and motels, with associated conference centers and similar uses. Restaurants and other eating facilities, meeting rooms, small retail shops, personal services, and other services ancillary to the hotel are also allowed. This category can be applied in combination with another land use category. Floor area ratio will range up to 1.5 for the hotel portion of the site.

Research/Office Park: Office, research, and manufacturing establishments whose operations are buffered from adjacent residential uses. Stanford Research Park is an example. Other uses that may be included are educational institutions and child care facilities. Compatible commercial service uses such as banks and restaurants, and residential or mixed uses that would benefit from the proximity to employment centers, will also be allowed. Additional uses, including retail services, restaurants, commercial recreation, churches, and private clubs may also be located in Research/Office Park areas, but only if they are found to be compatible with the surrounding area through the conditional use permit process. Maximum allowable floor area ratio ranges from 0.3 to 0.5, depending on site conditions.

Light Industrial: Wholesale and storage warehouses and the manufacturing, processing, repairing, and packaging of goods. Emission of fumes, noise, smoke, or other pollutants is strictly controlled. Examples include portions of the area south of Oregon Avenue between El Camino Real and Alma Street that historically have included these land uses, and the San Antonio Road industrial area. Compatible residential and mixed use projects may also be located in this category. Floor area ratio will range up to 0.5.

Institutional

School District Lands: Properties owned or leased by public school districts and used for educational, recreational, or other non-commercial, non-industrial purposes. Floor area ratio may not exceed 1.0.

Major Institution/Special Facilities: Institutional, academic, governmental, and community service uses and lands that are either publicly owned or operated as non-profit organizations. Examples are hospitals and City facilities.

Major Institution/University Lands: Academic and academic reserve areas of Stanford University. Population density and building intensity limits are established by conditional use permit with Santa Clara County. These lands are further designated by the following sub-categories of land use:

- **Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Single Family Residential**: Single family areas where the occupancy of the units is significantly or totally limited to individuals or families affiliated with the institution.
- **Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Multiple Family Residential**: Multiple family areas where the occupancy of the units is significantly or totally limited to individuals or families affiliated with the institution.
- **Major Institution/University Lands/Campus Educational Facilities**: Academic lands with a full complement of activities and densities that give them an urban character. Allowable uses are academic institutions and research facilities, student and faculty housing, and support services. Increases in student enrollment and faculty/staff size must be accompanied by measures that mitigate traffic and housing impacts.
- **Major Institution/University Lands/Academic Reserve and Open Space**: Academic lands having all the characteristics of open space but upon which some academic development may be allowed provided that open space amenities are retained. These lands are important for their aesthetic and ecological value as well as their potential for new academic uses.

City Structure

Fostering a Sense of Community

Goal L-2: An Enhanced Sense of "Community" with Development Designed to Foster Public Life and Meet Citywide Needs.

One of the first steps towards achieving this goal will be to recognize the physical elements that create "community" in Palo Alto. The traditional land use diagram is supplemented by a conceptual diagram (Map L-5) that defines how different parts of the community function and relate to one another. In essence, the diagram describes the "structure" of the City. Areas are classified as Residential Neighborhoods, Centers, or Employment Districts. Understanding the linkages and connections between these areas and within the region is critical to integrating land use and transportation planning. By recognizing and building on this structure, Palo Alto will remain a community where social contact and public life are encouraged and quality urban design is maintained.

See Map L-5 showing City Structure, including Residential Neighborhoods, Centers, and Employment Districts

Policy L-10:

Maintain a citywide structure of Residential Neighborhoods, Centers, and Employment Districts. Integrate these areas with the City's and the region's transit and street system.

Goals and policies in the Transportation and Business and Economics Element reinforce the City structure described here

Policy L-11:

Promote increased compatibility, interdependence, and support between commercial and mixed use centers and the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Palo Alto City Structure

- **Residential Neighborhoods** are areas of the City characterized by housing, parks and public facilities. Their boundaries are based on patterns of land subdivision and public perceptions about where one neighborhood stops and another begins. There are some 35 identifiable Residential Neighborhoods in Palo Alto. Most Residential Neighborhoods have land use classifications of Single Family Residential with some Multiple Family Residential.
- **Centers** are the commercial and mixed use areas of the City and may serve the region, the City, several neighborhoods, or a single neighborhood. They serve as the focus for community life and may include public facilities like schools and civic buildings. Centers are distributed throughout the City and are within walking or bicycling distance of virtually all Palo Alto residents. Keeping Palo Alto's Centers strong and healthy requires coordinated land use and community services planning. Most Centers have land use classifications of "Regional/Community Commercial," "Service Commercial," or "Neighborhood Commercial," or "Mixed Use." Centers, or parts of Centers that are public or civic spaces, are classified as "Public Parks," "School District Lands," or "Major Institutional/Special Facilities."
- **Employment Districts** are relatively large areas of the City dominated by low-rise office, high technology, light industrial and other job-generating land uses but containing relatively few retail and service uses. The broad land use goal for these areas is to impart a stronger sense of community to those who work or live here and to strengthen the connections between these areas and the rest of the City. Other goals are to improve bicycle and pedestrian circulation, expand the provision of services, and improve visual quality. Employment Districts have land use classifications of "Research/Office Park" and "Light Industrial."

RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

GOAL L-3: Safe, Attractive Residential Neighborhoods, Each With Its Own Distinct Character and Within Walking Distance of Shopping, Services, Schools, and/or other Public Gathering Places.

The smallest organizing unit of the City structure is the Residential Neighborhood. In Palo Alto, there are at least 35 identifiable neighborhoods. Because the City's neighborhoods were developed over more than a century's time, each has a distinct character. Each neighborhood provides a living reminder of the architectural styles, building materials, scale, and street patterns that were typical at the time of its development. These characteristics are more intact in some neighborhoods than in others. Neighborhood integrity can be conserved, and in some cases even enhanced, if the construction of new homes, additions, and remodeling responds to the prevailing scale, form, and materials.

Palo Alto's residential areas can be generally characterized as historical and traditional or modern. Those built prior to the mid 1940s have a traditional pattern of development with relatively narrow streets, curbside parking, vertical curbs, and street trees between the curb and sidewalk. Homes are oriented to the street and parking is often located to the rear of the lot. An exception is the Barron Park neighborhood, which still retains a semi-rural character and has special street standards that forego curbs and sidewalks for a more informal roadside design.

Many of the neighborhoods built after World War II were shaped by Modernist design ideas popularized by the builder Joseph Eichler. The houses were intentionally designed with austere facades and were oriented towards private backyards and interior courtyards, where expansive glass walls "brought the outside in." Referred to as "Eichlers," these houses were quickly copied by other builders. Curving streets and cul-de-sacs were designed to further the sense of the house as a private enclave. Curbs were flattened and joined to the sidewalk and planting strips were eliminated to create an uninterrupted plane on which to display the house. Palo Alto has some neighborhoods built by Eichler or his imitators that are essentially intact and are now considered classics. Some neighborhoods built during this period have modern street designs but contain more traditional home styles such as the California ranch. Design issues in Palo Alto's more contemporary neighborhoods include sympathetic restoration and renovation of these homes, protection of privacy if second stories are added, and efforts to make the streets more inviting to pedestrians. In some single-story neighborhoods, second stories are not desirable. In these instances, a single-story overlay zone may be considered by the City if requested by a substantial majority of the property owners.

Tucked away in Palo Alto's neighborhoods are attractive examples of higher density housing units that are compatible with the City's single family character. Dwellings like these, which occupy a single site, can serve as a prototype for new housing.

POLICY L-12:

Preserve the character of residential neighborhoods by encouraging new or remodeled structures to be compatible with the neighborhood and adjacent structures.

Guidelines that encourage certain design patterns and components are provided to all interested builders, contractors, and residents. These guidelines are used in approving Home Improvement Exceptions. In 1996, the Council adopted interim measures which require design compatibility for alterations or demolitions of residences constructed prior to 1940, and found to have historic merit. The community has also initiated discussions about design compatibility in neighborhoods throughout the City.

PROGRAM L-11:

Establish pedestrian-oriented design guidelines for residences that encourage features that enliven the street.

PROGRAM L-12:

Where compatible with neighborhood character, use Zoning and the Home Improvement Exception process to create incentives or eliminate obstacles to remodel houses with features that add street life and vitality.

POLICY L-13:

Evaluate alternative types of housing that increase density and provide more diverse housing opportunities.

Palo Alto has some fine examples of multi-unit housing that are very compatible with the surrounding single family residential neighborhoods, primarily because they are designed with entrances and gardens that face the street rather than entrances facing the interior of the development and parking next to the street. Examples include duplexes and small apartment buildings near Downtown and second units and cottage courts in single family neighborhoods.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Multi-unit buildings like these become a part of the neighborhood when entries and front gardens face the street.

PROGRAM L-13:

Create and apply zoning standards for Village Residential housing prototypes. Develop design guidelines for duplexes, townhouses, courtyard housing, second units, and small lot single family homes that ensure that such housing is compatible with single family neighborhoods and other areas where it may be permitted.

PROGRAM L-14:

Create and apply zoning standards for Transit-Oriented Residential housing prototypes, including consideration of minimum density standards. Develop design guidelines that ensure that such housing is compatible with the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue centers where it may be permitted.

See also Policy L-48 on building design

POLICY L-14:

Design and arrange new multifamily buildings, including entries and outdoor spaces, so that each unit has a clear relationship to a public street.

Policy L-15:

Preserve and enhance the public gathering spaces within walking distance of residential neighborhoods. Ensure that each residential neighborhood has such spaces.

Many of Palo Alto's older residential neighborhoods developed within walking distance of the commercial districts along University or California Avenues. Some of the post-World War II neighborhoods are within walking distance of neighborhood shopping centers but others are not. In such cases, a park, school, private community center, or small neighborhood retail facility could provide the closest public gathering space.

See also Policy L-18 on the connections between Centers and residential neighborhoods and Policy L-21 on public spaces in Centers

Former Ventura School provides community services such as the Palo Alto Community Child Care (PACCC) and a public gathering place for the Ventura neighborhood.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Policy L-16:

Consider siting small neighborhood-serving retail facilities in existing or new residential areas.

Carefully sited and designed "mom and pop" retail outlets can enhance the quality of life in the neighborhood by providing conveniences to residents who can meet neighbors and avoid car trips by walking to pick up a quart of milk, a writing pad or a magazine. These facilities also create public gathering spaces, which help to foster a sense of community.

Policy L-17:

Treat residential streets as both public ways and neighborhood amenities. Provide continuous sidewalks, healthy street trees, benches, and other amenities that favor pedestrians.

See also Policies T-22, 23, 25, and 30 addressing the character of streets

See also Goal L-9 and related Policies and Programs addressing Public Ways

Some of the features of modern street design have turned out to be undesirable for pedestrians. Wide streets and large curb radii at intersections encourage speeding and cars are often parked on the sidewalk in areas with rolled curbs. Where street trees are missing, the sidewalks are not as inviting or comfortable to pedestrians. The quality of a street environment helps define the character of a neighborhood and should be an important consideration in the design of infrastructure.

CENTERS

GOAL L-4: Inviting, Pedestrian-scale Centers That Offer a Variety of Retail and Commercial Services and Provide Focal Points and Community Gathering Places for the City's Residential Neighborhoods and Employment Districts.

Palo Alto has three different types of commercial Centers. Each type differs in form, intensity, and function. They are:

- **Regional Centers** are commercial activity centers of citywide and regional significance, with a mix of shopping, offices, and some housing. They are characterized by two- and three-story buildings with ground floor shops. Trees, benches, outdoor seating areas, sidewalks, plazas, and other amenities make the streets pedestrian-friendly. Transit is highly accessible and frequent. Regional Centers include University Avenue/Downtown and Stanford Shopping Center.
- **Multi-neighborhood Centers** are retail shopping centers or districts that serve more than one neighborhood with a diverse mix of uses including retail, service, office, and residential. One- and two-story buildings with storefront windows, entries, and outdoor seating areas create a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. Plazas and parks provide public gathering spaces around which retail uses are clustered. Future plans for these areas include local transit or jitney service that links them to other Centers in the City. Multi-neighborhood Centers include California Avenue, Town and Country Village, and South El Camino Real.
- **Neighborhood Centers** are small retail centers with a primary trade area limited to the immediately surrounding area; often anchored by a grocery or drug store and may include a variety of smaller retail shops and offices oriented toward the everyday needs of surrounding residents. Selected streets provide walking and biking connections from adjacent neighborhoods. As with the Multi-neighborhood Centers, future plans include local transit or jitney service and new public gathering places around which new retail uses may be clustered. Palo Alto's four Neighborhood Centers are Midtown, Alma Plaza, Charleston Center, and Edgewood Plaza.

See Map L-5 for locations of Palo Alto's Centers

All Centers

POLICY L-18 :

Encourage the upgrading and revitalization of selected Centers in a manner that is compatible with the character of surrounding neighborhoods.

See also Program C-25

PROGRAM L-15 :

Establish a planning process for Centers that identifies the desired character of the area, its role within the City, the locations of public gathering spaces, appropriate land uses and building forms, and important street and pedestrian connections to surrounding Residential Neighborhoods.

POLICY L-19:

Encourage a mix of land uses in all Centers, including housing and an appropriate mix of small-scale local businesses.

POLICY L-20:

Encourage street frontages that contribute to retail vitality in all Centers. Reinforce street corners with buildings that come up to the sidewalk or that form corner plazas.

Well-designed storefronts with attractive display windows and building entries at frequent intervals are inviting to shoppers. They help support retail vitality by encouraging people to stay in the area and move from store to store. These features are particularly important at corners because they draw shoppers across streets to continue shopping. They also provide opportunities to convey the image and character of the center to motorists.

POLICY L-21:

Provide all Centers with centrally located gathering spaces that create a sense of identity and encourage economic revitalization. Encourage public amenities such as benches, street trees, kiosks, restrooms and public art.

PROGRAM L-16:

Study the feasibility of using public and private funds to provide and maintain landscaping and public spaces such as parks, plazas, and sidewalks within commercial areas.

PROGRAM L-17:

Through public/private cooperation, provide obvious, clean, and accessible restrooms available for use during normal business hours.

POLICY L-22:

Enhance the appearance of streets and sidewalks within all Centers through an aggressive maintenance, repair and cleaning program; street improvements; and the use of a variety of paving materials and landscaping.

See also Policy T-14 and associated programs

PROGRAM L-18:

Identify priority street improvements that could make a substantial contribution to the character of Centers, including widening sidewalks, narrowing travel lanes, creating medians, restriping to allow diagonal parking, and planting street trees.

Regional Centers

University Avenue/Downtown

POLICY L-23:

Maintain and enhance the University Avenue/Downtown area as the central business district of the City, with a mix of commercial, civic, cultural, recreational and residential uses. Promote quality design that recognizes the regional and historical importance of the area and reinforces its pedestrian character.

University Avenue/Downtown has been the symbolic center of Palo Alto since the City was founded in 1894, and it has become a thriving regional hub of commercial and retail activity with an associated increase in employment. The area has retained a pedestrian-scale ambience, even in the face of enormous development pressures. A combination of project size limits, height limits, and floor area restrictions has encouraged preservation of the area's historic buildings and retention of the original street grid. To further shape and encourage publicly contributing redevelopment, the City adopted The Downtown Urban Design Guide in 1994.

See Programs L-8, L-9, N-70, and N-71; also Policies B-20, L-56, T-21 and T-45, and associated programs

PROGRAM L-19:

Support implementation of the Downtown Urban Design Guide.

The Downtown Urban Design Guide is not mandatory but provides useful ideas and direction for private development and public improvement in the Downtown area.

PROGRAM L-20:

Facilitate reuse of existing buildings.

POLICY L-24:

Ensure that University Avenue/Downtown is pedestrian-friendly and supports bicycle use. Use public art and other amenities to create an environment that is inviting to pedestrians.

PROGRAM L-21:

Improve the University Avenue/Downtown area by adding landscaping and bicycle parking and encouraging large development projects to benefit the public by incorporating public art.

Photo courtesy of Palo Alto Historical Society and Steve Steiger

The terminus of University Avenue at Alma Street was a graceful plaza, shown in this historic photo, until 1940 when it was displaced by a railroad underpass. The City and Stanford University are jointly exploring the possibility of reconstructing a civic plaza at this location.

South of Forest Mixed Use Area

POLICY L-25:

Enhance the character of the South of Forest Area (SOFA) as a mixed use area.

The South of Forest Area (SOFA) is a sub-area of University Avenue/Downtown and provides a good example of a successful mixed use development pattern. It is home to such diverse uses as automotive services, markets and cafes, industrial design and architectural firms, and dry cleaning businesses. The Downtown Urban Design Guide acknowledges the need to integrate this sub-area with University Avenue while retaining its traditional identity and eclectic character.

See Goal G-5, Policy G-11 and Program G-14 for more information on Coordinated Area Plans

PROGRAM L-22:

Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the SOFA and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) site.

Relocation of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation will create an opportunity to plan for redevelopment of the former campus site.

Stanford Shopping Center

POLICY L-26:

Maintain Stanford Shopping Center as one of the Bay Area's premiere regional shopping centers. Encourage any new development at the Center to occur through infill, including development on existing surface parking lots.

Stanford Shopping Center is a major regional retail center, encompassing 70 acres and containing 1,330,000 square feet of floor space. The Center has been expanded and remodeled several times since its opening in 1956. While the Center has had many positive economic benefits, it is primarily auto-oriented and is not as well integrated into the fabric of the community as it might be. The Shopping Center's parking lot redevelopment and building expansion plans approved in 1997 incorporate improved pedestrian and transit connections to University Avenue/Downtown, the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station, and nearby housing.

PROGRAM L-23:

Identify strategies to reuse surface parking lots and improve pedestrian and transit connections at Stanford Shopping Center.

PROGRAM L-24:

Maintain a Stanford Shopping Center development cap of 80,000 square feet of additional development beyond that existing on June 14, 1996.

University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area

POLICY L-27:

Pursue redevelopment of the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station area to establish a link between University Avenue/Downtown and the Stanford Shopping Center.

See also Program T-14

The University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area is bounded by the west end of University Avenue, the Palm Drive entrance to Stanford University, El Camino Park, and Town and Country Village. Stanford University and the City of Palo Alto initiated a joint planning effort in 1993 to redesign this important area. During the coming decades, the area will be transformed from a generally inhospitable interface between the University and the central business district to an attractive regional center oriented around the Peninsula's busiest transit station. The train depot was recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places and will be restored to serve as a gracious centerpiece for the area. Redevelopment of the area will provide linkages and pedestrian connections between University Avenue/Downtown, Stanford Shopping Center, Stanford University, and nearby Residential Neighborhoods. This area's reuse should optimize the effectiveness of the multi-modal transit center, protect nearby residential areas from potential adverse development impacts, improve both the City and University gateways, and enhance parkland and natural resources.

See plan view of this area near Program T-14

PROGRAM L-25:

Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area.

See also Goal G-5, Policy G-11 and Program G-14 on coordinated area plans

Coordinated area plans, like specific plans, provide a method and process to prepare a more detailed plan for development of an identified area, in this case the Transit Station Area.

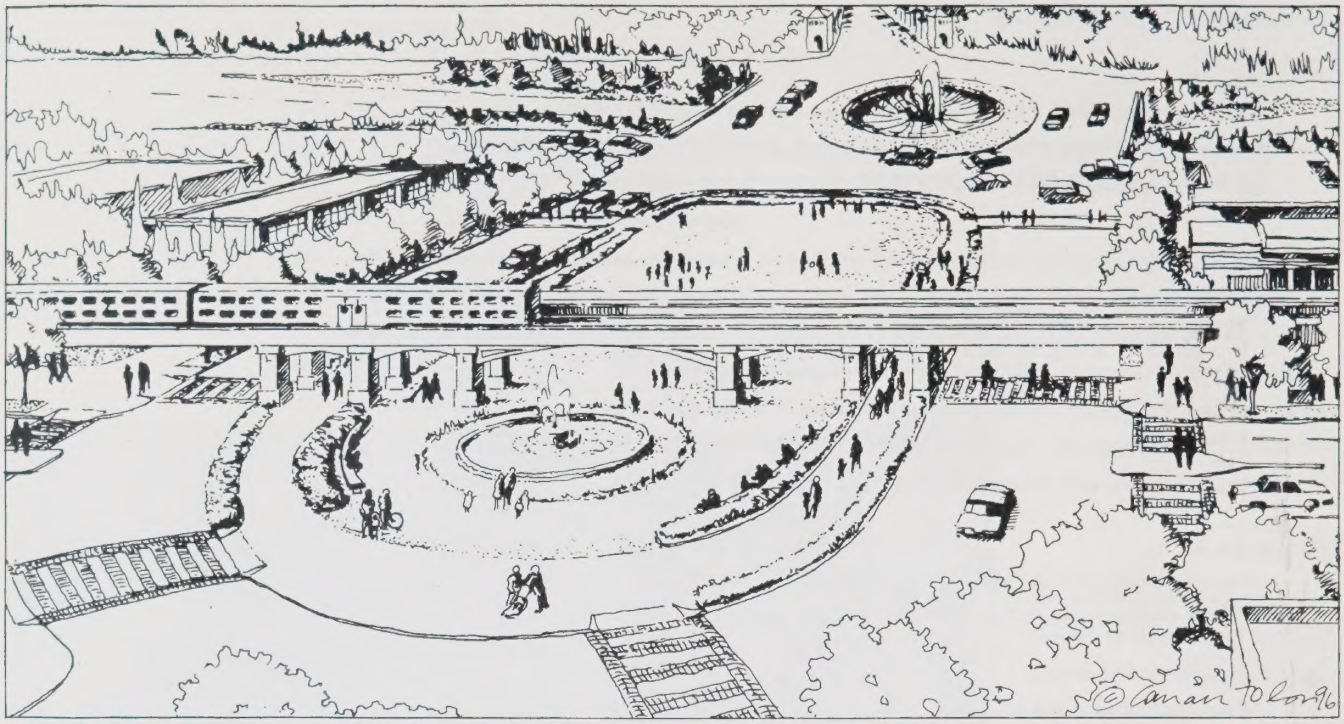


Illustration by Canan Tolon

The University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area is the interface between Stanford University and the City's central business district. It includes the Peninsula's busiest transit station and the historic Southern Pacific Depot. This illustration shows what the intersection could become if the current road interchange were replaced with a civic space and roundabout circulation.

PROGRAM L-26:

Establish the following unranked community design priorities for the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area:

- ***Improving pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto connections to create an urban link between University Avenue/Downtown and Stanford Shopping Center.***
- ***Creating a major civic space at the Caltrain Station that links University Avenue/Downtown and Palm Drive.***
- ***Infilling underutilized parcels with a mix of uses such as shopping, housing, office, hotel, and medical facilities.***
- ***Improving public park space.***
- ***Protecting views of the foothills by guiding building heights and massing.***

Multi-neighborhood Centers

California Avenue

See also Policies B-23 and B-24 regarding California Avenue

POLICY L-28:

Maintain the existing scale, character, and function of the California Avenue business district as a shopping, service, and office center intermediate in function and scale between Downtown and the smaller neighborhood business areas.

PROGRAM L-27:

Create regulations for the California Avenue area that allow for the replacement or rehabilitation of smaller buildings while preventing buildings that are out of scale with existing buildings.

Program L-28:

Work with merchants, property owners, and City representatives to create an urban design guide for the California Avenue business district.

California Avenue is a smaller second "main street" in the City and is also served by a multi-modal transit station. It is more local-serving than University Avenue/Downtown but is the closest business district to employees and visitors to Stanford Research Park and portions of Stanford University. It is the oldest part of the City, with origins dating back to the 1850s when it was the main commercial street for the town of Mayfield. This connection to the past is valued by the community and is an important part of what makes the area unique.

Although only fragments of the early commercial architecture are visible, it is possible that there are remnants of original facades behind storefronts erected in the 1950s and 60s. The original street pattern is intact and there has been little combining of lots. Buildings are mostly two stories tall, and parking is located off rear alleys. The scale of development provides an environment that is comfortable for pedestrians, albeit one that has dated architecture and signage. New businesses have located on the street and there is interest in improving the appearance of the street while preserving its "home town" character.

California Avenue is the closest business district to the Stanford Research Park and parts of Stanford University. The community values its friendly, casual ambiance.

Policy L-29:

Encourage residential and mixed use residential development in the California Avenue area.

Program L-29:

Revise zoning of the California Avenue business district to reduce the non-residential development potential to levels comparable to other commercial areas in the City while retaining substantial residential development potential.

Policy L-30:

Improve the transition between the California-Cambridge area and the single family residential neighborhood of Evergreen Park. Avoid abrupt changes in scale and density between the two areas.

POLICY L-31:

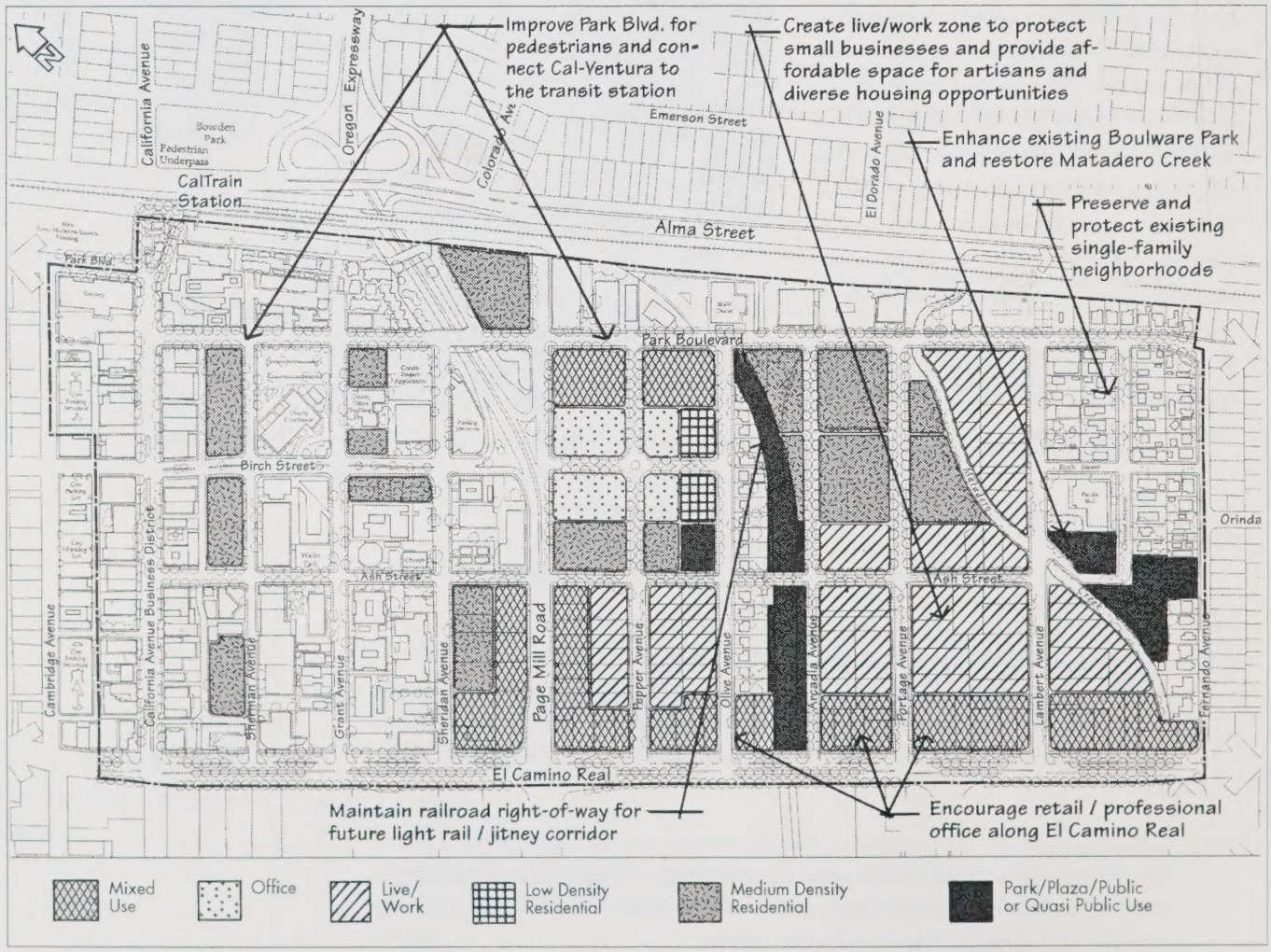
Develop the Cal-Ventura area as a well-designed mixed use district with diverse land uses, two- to three-story buildings, and a network of pedestrian-oriented streets providing links to California Avenue.

Cal-Ventura is a mixed use area adjacent to the California Avenue business district. It is also served by the California Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station. Cal-Ventura offers exceptional opportunities for new transit-oriented development, as it includes several underutilized properties likely to redevelop in the near future. New housing in this area could provide the momentum for new pedestrian amenities and shuttle bus connections to nearby Stanford Research Park.

PROGRAM L-30:

Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the Cal-Ventura area. Use the land use diagram from the Community Design Workshop as the starting point for preparing this Plan.

This diagram resulted from a one-day community workshop and is only a conceptual "starting point" for future planning efforts. The Cal-Ventura area offers opportunities for housing and transit-oriented mixed use development with connections to the California Ave. commercial center and the multi-modal transit station.



A land use diagram for the Cal-Ventura area was prepared at one of the workshops conducted during the preparation of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan. The diagram contains useful recommendations and should be consulted as more specific design concepts for Cal-Ventura are prepared.

PROGRAM L-31:

Establish the following unranked priorities for redevelopment within the Cal-Ventura area:

- ***Connect the Cal-Ventura area with the Multi-modal Transit Station and California Avenue. Provide new streets and pedestrian connections that complete the street grid and create a walkable neighborhood.***
- ***Fry's Electronics site (300 Portage): Continued retail activity is anticipated for this site until 2019. A program should be developed for the future use of the site for mixed density multi- family housing and a park or other open space.***
- ***Hewlett-Packard: Uses that are compatible with the surrounding area and a site plan that facilitates pedestrian use of Park Boulevard.***
- ***North of Sheridan Avenue: Development of one or more of the City-owned parking lots with primarily residential uses, provided that public parking spaces are replaced.***
- ***Park Boulevard: Streetscape improvements.***

Town and Country Village

POLICY L-32:

Maintain Town and Country Village as an attractive community-serving retail center. Future development at this site should preserve its existing amenities, pedestrian scale, and architectural character.

See also Policy B-26

The design of Town and Country Village is an idealized version of the Hacienda architecture of Spanish California. Built during a period of rapid growth in the 1960s, it epitomized the culture and climate of California to a generation of newcomers. Clusters of low buildings with authentic random-colored barrel tile roofs, outdoor walkways, bougainvillea and ivy-draped porticos, and large native oaks give the Village a distinctive character. In the years since its construction, many of the native oaks have been lost. The remaining oaks should be maintained and protected and new oaks should be planted to restore the site's original charm. The street edge

Native oaks and hacienda-style architecture create a distinct character at Town and Country Shopping Center. The conveniences of the local-serving businesses and grocery store are valued by the community.

should be strengthened with wider sidewalks, street trees, and a low hedge to screen the pavement and parked cars.

The Village is appreciated not only for its design amenities but also for the convenience of its community-serving retail shops and grocery store. These uses as well as the design character should be preserved in any future site redevelopment.

POLICY L-33:

In Town and Country Village, encourage housing development consistent with a vibrant business environment.

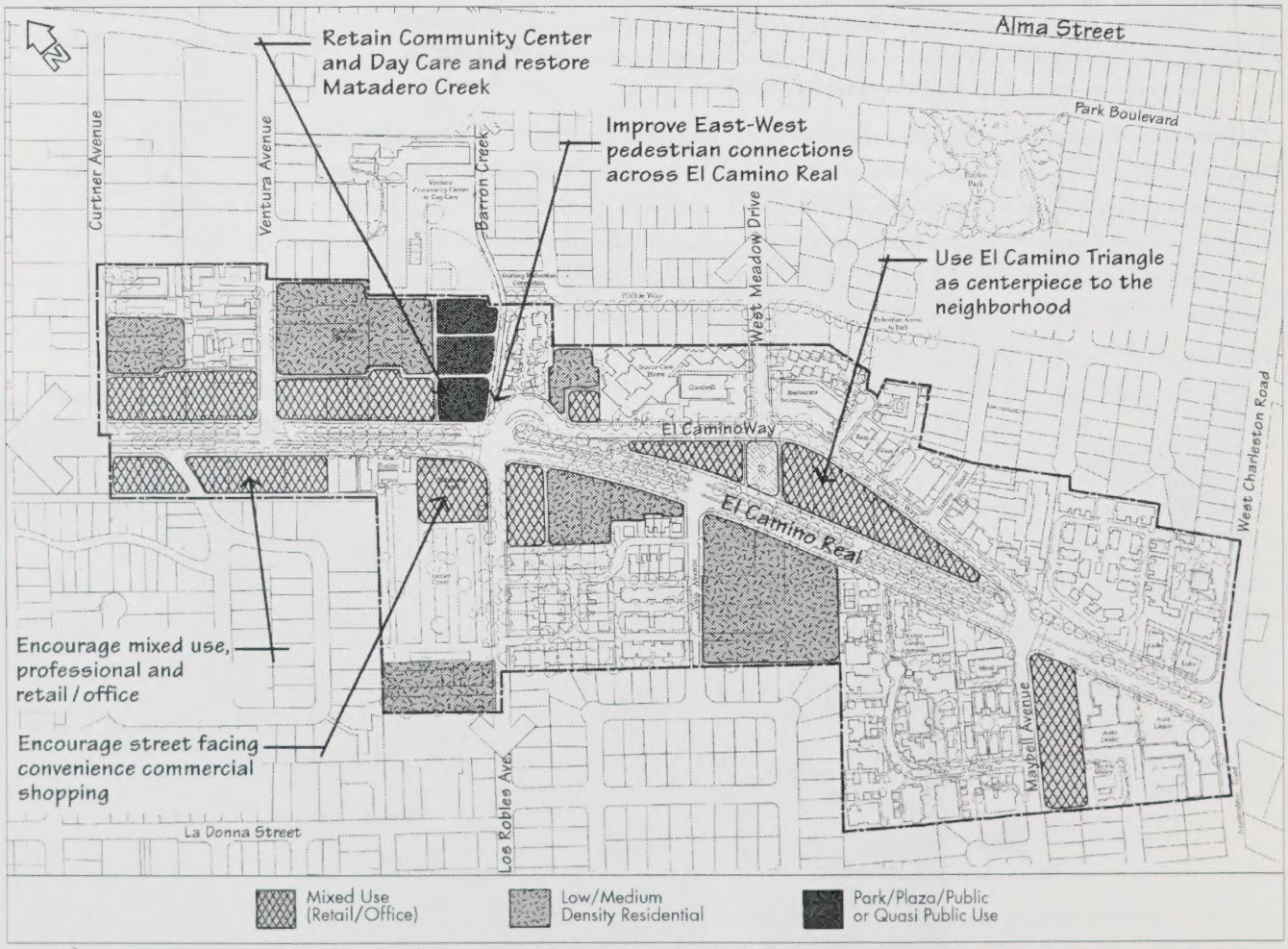
POLICY L-34:

Encourage improvement of pedestrian and auto circulation and landscaping improvements, including maintenance of existing oak trees and planting additional oak trees.

South El Camino Real

POLICY L-35:

Establish the South El Camino Real area as a well-designed, compact, vital, Multi-neighborhood Center with diverse uses, a mix of one-, two-, and three-story buildings, and a network of pedestrian-oriented streets and ways.



This diagram resulted from a one-day community workhop and is only a conceptual "starting point" for future planning efforts in the South El Camino Real area.

South El Camino Real, extending from Page Mill Road south to the Mountain View City limits, is probably the City's most recalcitrant community design problem. Prior to the 1950s, El Camino Real was a two-lane state highway connecting the towns along the Peninsula. Beginning in the 1960s, the highway was progressively widened and redesigned to prevailing state highway standards. Older buildings and mature trees were removed in the process, resulting in the visually stark and discordant image still evident today.

See also Policy B-25, Program B-12, and Program T-16

Automotive and other service commercial uses have been replaced, through City downzoning in 1978 and 1984, by higher density housing along some segments of the highway. A sign amortization program, tree planting program, and design guidelines have improved the appearance somewhat but substantial design challenges remain. Creating a pedestrian-oriented environment is difficult in the face of an established pattern of auto-oriented uses, State highway design standards, and the need to protect housing from the adverse impacts of high volume traffic.

PROGRAM L-32:

Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the South El Camino Real area. Use the land use map from the Community Design Workshop as a starting point for preparing this Plan.

See also Goal G-5, Policy G-11 and Program G-14 on coordinated area plans

A land use diagram for a portion of South El Camino Real was prepared at one of the workshops conducted during the preparation of the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan. The diagram contains useful recommendations and should be consulted as more specific design concepts for the area are prepared.

Consider the following elements for development within the South El Camino Real area:

- Retail and professional office space along El Camino Real, including Mixed Use Retail/Office development.
- Reuse of some of the existing motel sites, including potential Single Room Occupancy hotels.
- Community center and child care uses.
- A publicly-accessible neighborhood focal point at the El Camino Triangle, with new Mixed Use (Retail/Office) buildings and links to the Ventura neighborhood.
- Improve pedestrian connections across El Camino Real.

The intersection of Ventura Avenue and El Camino Real presents an opportunity for improved pedestrian connections across El Camino Real to link the Ventura and Barron Park neighborhoods.

PROGRAM L-33:

Study ways to make South El Camino Real more pedestrian-friendly, including redesigning the street to provide wider sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings at key intersections, street trees, and streetscape improvements.

Redesigning South El Camino Real to boulevard standards was considered but ultimately rejected in favor of continuing accommodations for automobile traffic, and reserving space for a future light rail extension from Mountain View. Two design interventions are proposed to give a more coherent image to the street. First, two-story structures with retail-oriented street frontage and rear parking should be encouraged. Second, redesign of the public right-of-way should be encouraged to make it more suitable for pedestrians without reducing the number of travel lanes. These improvements should be focused at retail nodes and along segments of the street where they can benefit from existing positive design features, such as street trees.

PROGRAM L-34:

Provide better connections across El Camino Real to bring the Ventura and Barron Park neighborhoods together and to improve linkages to local schools and parks.

POLICY L-36:

Allow a full range of office and retail uses on shallow parcels along South El Camino Real, subject to adequate buffering from adjacent residential uses.

PROGRAM L-35:

Consider Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) as a tool to encourage re-development and/or community-serving amenities along South El Camino Real.

Neighborhood Centers

Alma Plaza, Charleston Center, Edgewood Plaza, Midtown

POLICY L-37:

Maintain the scale and local-serving focus of Palo Alto's four Neighborhood Centers. Support their continued improvement and vitality.

See also Policy B-27

Neighborhood Centers are smaller than Multi-neighborhood Centers and have more limited service areas. They should be pleasant, attractive places that provide opportunities for shopping as well as social contact with friends and neighbors. These three policies and three programs apply to all Neighborhood Centers. Because Midtown's parcel pattern is more complex and because the Center is bisected by two principal streets, it is the subject of additional, more focused policies and programs.

PROGRAM L-36:

Evaluate current zoning to determine if it supports the types of uses and scale of buildings considered appropriate in Neighborhood Centers.

PROGRAM L-37:

Encourage property owners within Neighborhood Centers to prepare master plans, with the participation of local businesses, property owners, and nearby residents.

Charleston Center provides the convenience of neighborhood shopping and opportunities for socializing with friends and neighbors.

POLICY L-38:

Encourage maximum use of Neighborhood Centers by ensuring that the publicly maintained areas are clean, well-lit, and attractively landscaped.

POLICY L-39:

Facilitate opportunities to improve pedestrian-oriented commercial activity within Neighborhood Centers.

PROGRAM L-38:

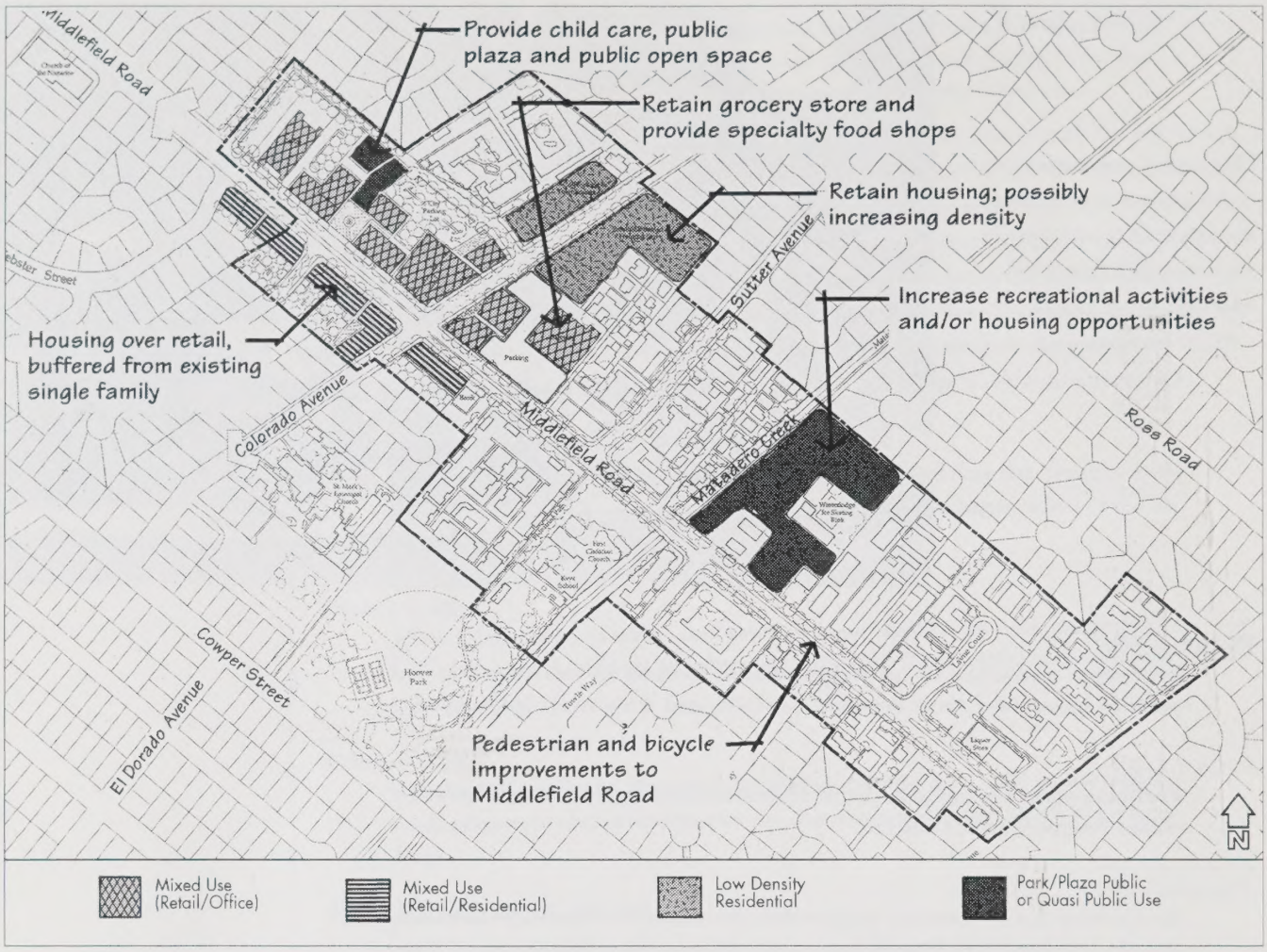
Revise land use and zoning designations as needed to encourage medium-density housing (20 to 25 units per acre) within or near Neighborhood Centers served by public transportation to support a more vital mix of commercial activities.

Midtown

POLICY L-40:

Revitalize Midtown as an attractive, compact Neighborhood Center with diverse local-serving uses, a mix of one- and two-story buildings, adequate parking, and a network of pedestrian-oriented streets, ways and gathering places. Encourage retention of Midtown's grocery stores and encourage a variety of neighborhood retail shops and services.

Midtown is unique among Palo Alto's Neighborhood Centers, as it is comprised of over 25 parcels with nearly as many individual owners. The area serves a number of neighborhoods in the vicinity of its two principal streets—Middlefield Road and Colorado Avenue—making traffic circulation and pedestrian safety important planning issues. Midtown should retain its fabric of small-scale, primarily local-serving commercial uses. Future decisions on public and private improvements should seek to have Midtown be a vibrant center to the surrounding neighborhoods. Owners of commercial property, working with the neighborhoods and the City, need to be active proponents of any needed additional parking.



This diagram resulted from a one-day community workshop and is only a conceptual "starting point" for future planning efforts in Midtown.

PROGRAM L-39:

Prepare a plan for Midtown with the participation of property owners, local businesses, and nearby residents. Consider the Midtown Economic Study and the land use concepts identified during the 1994 Community Design Workshop in developing the plan. The plan should have a special emphasis on public improvements, including parking, street furniture and signage.

The Midtown Plan should address the appearance and location of private development, but focus primarily on improvements to the public areas, including parking, street furniture and informational signs, and address the phasing, construction and financing of improvements.

PROGRAM L-40:

Make improvements to Middlefield Road in Midtown that slow traffic, encourage commercial vitality, make the street more pedestrian-friendly, and unify the northeast and southwest sides of the commercial area, with consideration given to traffic impacts on the residential neighborhood.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Changes to Middlefield Road in Midtown could include widened sidewalks and new street trees. The number of travel lanes might be reduced from four to two, with turn lanes, allowing for increased parking, bicycle lanes, and a planted median.

PROGRAM L-41:

Support bicycle and pedestrian trail improvements along a restored Matadero Creek within Hoover Park.

POLICY L-41:

Maintain existing residential uses within the Midtown area and encourage additional residential development.

PROGRAM L-42:

Retain the existing housing along Colorado Avenue and consider increasing the density to allow townhouses, co-housing, and/or housing for the disabled.

See also Goal N-2 and associated policies for additional information on creeks and creek access. See also Policies L-68 and T-17 on creeks

The channelized section of Matadero Creek could be restored to a natural condition with bicycle and pedestrian paths connecting nearby neighborhoods to Midtown.

Employment Districts

Goal L-5: High Quality Employment Districts, Each With Their Own Distinctive Character and Each Contributing to the Character of the City as a Whole.

See Map L-5 for the location of Palo Alto's Employment Districts

Palo Alto's four Employment Districts represent a development pattern not found in other parts of the City. The Districts are characterized by large one- and two-story buildings separated by large parking lots and landscaped areas. They are accessed primarily by automobile and are typically self-contained, with limited connections to other parts of the City. Meeting daily needs such as child care, errands, and even eating usually requires a trip by car. As redevelopment occurs, design changes should shift these areas away from complete reliance on automobiles and promote pedestrian and bicycle connections to the rest of the City. Land use changes should provide a more diverse mix of services and activities.

All Employment Districts

See also Goals T-1, T-2 and T-3 and associated Policies and Programs

Policy L-42:

Encourage Employment Districts to develop in a way that encourages transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel and reduces the number of auto trips for daily errands.

Program L-43:

Modify existing zoning regulations and create incentives for employers to provide employee services in their existing buildings—for example, office support services, restaurants, convenience stores, public gathering places, and child care facilities—to reduce the need for employees to drive to these services.

See Program T-23 regarding sidewalks and paths in the Stanford Research Park

Policy L-43:

Provide sidewalks, pedestrian paths, and connections to the citywide bikeway system within Employment Districts. Pursue opportunities to build sidewalks and paths in renovation and expansion projects.

Program L-44:

Design the paths and sidewalks to be attractive and comfortable and consistent with the character of the area where they are located.

Stanford Research Park

Policy L-44:

Develop the Stanford Research Park as a compact employment center served by a variety of transportation modes.

The Stanford Research Park contains many research and development (R&D) uses in a campus setting. The park has about 150 companies and is the location of corporate headquarters or R&D facilities for several prominent national and international companies. In the future, the frontage along El Camino Real near California Avenue should be designed to strengthen the connection between the Research Park and the California Avenue Business District, including the California Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station.

Program L-45:

Create and apply zoning standards and design guidelines for commercial hotels and conference centers.

Stanford Medical Center

Policy L-45:

Develop Stanford Medical Center in a manner that recognizes the citywide goal of compact, pedestrian-oriented development as well as the functional needs of the Medical Center.

Stanford Medical Center is a major medical treatment, academic, and research facility encompassing the Stanford University School of Medicine, Stanford University Hospital and its clinics, and the Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. Expansion of these facilities needs to be evaluated in the context of citywide planning goals and policies, especially related to traffic.

See also Policies B-32 and T-26

Program L-46:

Work with Stanford to prepare an area plan for the Stanford Medical Center.

An area plan for the Medical Center should address building locations, floor area ratios, height limits, and parking requirements. It should discuss the preservation of historic and open space resources and the protection of views and view corridors. The plan should describe improvements to the streetscape and circulation pattern that will improve pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto connections.

See also Policy T-48 on parking at Stanford Medical Center

East Bayshore and San Antonio Road/Bayshore Corridor

Policy L-46:

Maintain the East Bayshore and San Antonio Road/Bayshore Corridor areas as diverse business and light industrial districts.

These areas provide valuable space for small businesses and support services. The design of new or redeveloped buildings and landscaping, particularly northeast of the Bayshore Freeway, should reflect the area's location near the baylands. Connections to the nearby baylands should be strengthened by taking advantage of views and improving bicycle and pedestrian connections to the open space area.

See also Policy B-33 regarding affordable office space

Policy L-47:

Consider the East Meadow Circle Area as a potential site for higher density housing that provides a transition between existing housing and nearby industrial development.

The East Meadow Circle Area is adjacent to single family residential neighborhoods on the north and west. If major redevelopment occurs in this area, it could provide a location for additional housing. Including a component of neighborhood commercial uses would benefit residents of existing homes in the area as well as the new homes. Presently, the nearest commercial center is Charleston Center, more than a mile away.

Program L-47:

Undertake a Community Design Workshop for the East Meadow Circle Area.

Buildings

GOAL L-6: Well-designed Buildings that Create Coherent Development Patterns and Enhance City Streets and Public Spaces.

Palo Alto has many buildings of outstanding architectural merit representing a variety of styles and periods. Among them are neoclassical buildings from the turn of the century, mission revival buildings designed in the 1920s and 30s, California modernist residences of the 1950s and 1960s, and contemporary buildings of recent decades. The buildings that have been most valued by residents over the years are those that are built of quality materials, show evidence of craftsmanship, fit with their surroundings, and help make neighborhoods comfortable and appealing. To help achieve quality design, the Architectural Review Board reviews buildings and site design for commercial and multi-family residential projects. In recent years, both commercial and residential buildings in Palo Alto have received regional and national design recognition.

POLICY L-48:

Promote high quality, creative design and site planning that is compatible with surrounding development and public spaces.

PROGRAM L-48:

Use the Zoning Ordinance, design review process, design guidelines, and Coordinated Area Plans to ensure high quality residential and commercial design.

PROGRAM L-49:

In areas of the City having a historic or consistent design character, design new development to maintain and support the existing character.

POLICY L-49:

Design buildings to revitalize streets and public spaces and to enhance a sense of community and personal safety. Provide an ordered variety of entries, porches, windows, bays and balconies along public ways where it is consistent with neighborhood character; avoid blank or solid walls at street level; and include human-scale details and massing.

See also Program G-17 regarding an illustrated zoning ordinance

Building entries, windows, and human-scale design features help to enliven streets and other public spaces, making them safer and more interesting.

PROGRAM L-50:

Undertake a comprehensive review of residential and commercial zoning requirements to identify additional architectural standards that should be incorporated to implement Policy L-49.

PROGRAM L-51:

Use illustrations and form code methods for simplifying the Zoning Ordinance and to promote well-designed buildings.

PROGRAM L-52:

Discourage the use of fences that obscure the view of houses.

Tall fences along the street make the street both less appealing and less safe. Even the houses and yards behind tall fences are thought by law enforcement officers to be less safe when closed off from view. Being able to see private homes and gardens as you pass down the street conveys a sense that people are nearby and shows the special character of the neighborhood. While tall hedges can sometimes have the same undesirable effects as walls, they usually are more attractive and, in some areas, are an important component of neighborhood character. Both hedges and walls should be used in a way that permits views of the house from the street.

See also Policy L-14 on the relationships of buildings to the street

POLICY L-50:

Encourage high quality signage that is attractive, appropriate for the location and balances visibility needs with aesthetic needs.

See also Program B-9 about revising the sign ordinance

PROGRAM L-53:

Promote awards programs and other forms of public recognition for projects of architectural merit that contribute positively to the community.

Historic Character

GOAL L-7: Conservation and Preservation of Palo Alto's Historic Buildings, Sites, and Districts.

See Map L-7 for the location of historic districts, buildings of historic merit, and other historic resources

Palo Alto has a rich stock of historic buildings, some predating the City's establishment in 1894. The City's Historic Inventory identifies approximately 400 buildings of historical merit. There are 12 buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. There are also two National Register historic districts in the City: the Ramona Street District and the Professorville District. The "El Palo Alto" redwood tree, believed to be the site of a 1776 encampment of the Portola Expedition, is one of 19 sites in town that are registered California Points of Historical Interest. Seven sites or structures are listed on the California Register of Historic Landmarks, including the garage at 367 Addison that was the birthplace of Hewlett-Packard. The length of El Camino Real from San Francisco to San Diego, including the section that passes through Palo Alto, is a State Historic Landmark.

POLICY L-51:

Encourage public and private upkeep and preservation of resources that have historic merit, including residences listed in the Historic Inventory.

PROGRAM L-54:

Review and update the City's Inventory of historic resources including City-owned structures.

Buildings on the National Register of Historic Places

- Downing House
  706 Cowper St.
- Dunkir House
  420 Maple St.
- Fraternal Hall
  140 University Ave.
- Kee House
  2310 Yale Ave.
- Norris House
  1247 Cowper St.
- Pedro de Lemos House
  100-110 Waverley Oaks
- PettigrewHouse
  1336 Cowper St.
- Post Office
  300 Hamilton St.
- Southern Pacific Depot
  95 University Ave.
- Squire House
  900 University Ave.
- YWCA Hostess House
  25 University Ave.
- Wilson House
  860 University Ave.

PROGRAM L-55:

Reassess the Historic Preservation Ordinance to ensure its effectiveness in the maintenance and preservation of historic resources, particularly in the University Avenue/Downtown area.

PROGRAM L-56:

Maintain and strengthen the design review procedure for exterior remodeling or demolition of historic resources. Discourage demolition of historic resources and severely restrict demolition of Landmark resources.

PROGRAM L-57:

Encourage salvage of discarded historic building materials.

PROGRAM L-58:

For proposed exterior alterations or additions to designated Historic Landmarks, require design review findings that the proposed changes are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

A subdivision exception was granted in 1996 to preserve the gateway and attached wall, entry to the Pedro de Lemos Hacienda.

POLICY L-52:

Encourage the preservation of significant historic resources owned by the City of Palo Alto. Allow such resources to be altered to meet contemporary needs, provided that the preservations standards adopted by the City Council are satisfied.

POLICY L-53:

Actively seek state and federal funding for the preservation of buildings of historical merit and consider public/private partnerships for capital and program improvements.

POLICY L-54:

Support the goals and objectives of the Statewide Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan for California.

POLICY L-55:

Relocation may be considered as a preservation strategy when consistent with State and National Standards regarding the relocation of historic resources.

POLICY L-56:

To reinforce the scale and character of University Avenue/Downtown, promote the preservation of significant historic buildings.

See also Policies B-19 and B-20 and Programs N-64 and N-65

Older buildings may be at a disadvantage because of the expense and specialized skills needed to adapt them for contemporary use. This is particularly true where seismic strengthening is needed or where the site cannot accommodate current parking requirements. In some cases, the use for which the building was designed is not even allowed by current zoning. The following programs are intended to help overcome these obstacles and enable older buildings to be more competitive with new development.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

An exemption from on-site parking requirements helped preserve the historic Byxbee House *(left)* and the early 20th Century garden at the Dr. Thomas M. and Dora Moody Williams Park *(above)*.

PROGRAM L-59:

Allow parking exceptions for historic buildings to encourage rehabilitation. Require design review findings that the historic integrity of the building exterior will be maintained.

PROGRAM L-60:

Continue to use a TDR Ordinance to allow the transfer of development rights from designated buildings of historic significance in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zone to non-historic receiver sites in the CD zone. Planned Community (PC) zone properties in the Downtown also qualify for this program.

POLICY L-57:

Develop incentives for the retention and rehabilitation of buildings with historic merit in all zones.

PROGRAM L-61:

Allow nonconforming uses for the life of historic buildings.

PROGRAM L-62:

Promote awards programs and other forms of public recognition for exemplary Historic Preservation projects.

PROGRAM L-63:

Streamline, to the maximum extent feasible, any future processes for design review of historic structures to eliminate unnecessary delay and uncertainty for the applicant and to encourage historic preservation.

PROGRAM L-64:

Encourage and assist owners of historically significant buildings in finding ways to adapt and restore these buildings, including participation in state and federal tax relief programs.

See also State Health and Safety Code Section 18950 and 18951

POLICY L-58:

Promote adaptive reuse of old buildings.

Part of what makes Palo Alto's business districts and neighborhoods so interesting is the juxtaposition of buildings from different eras. This richness of character can be preserved by "adaptively reusing" or updating older buildings instead of tearing them down and replacing them. Even when the buildings are not historic, their reuse can help maintain the scale and visual interest of the City or a business district.

POLICY L-59:

Follow the procedures established in the State Public Resources Code for the protection of designated historic buildings damaged by earthquake or other natural disaster.

The State Public Resources Code establishes a procedure for determining whether structures listed on National, State, or local public registers of historic places that are damaged in an earthquake or other natural disaster may be demolished or significantly altered. The Code prohibits demolition unless the structures present an imminent threat of bodily harm to the public or damage to adjacent property, or unless the State Office of Historic Preservation determines that the structures may be demolished. The State Code provides that local governments may request a determination about demolition from the State Office of Historic Preservation, which then reviews the buildings with the participation of a team of three local residents. After this team has conducted their review of the buildings, the State Historic Preservation Office may approve demolition of the buildings.

The State Historical Building Code is found in Part 2.7 of the California Health and Safety Code

PROGRAM L-65:

Seek additional innovative ways to apply current codes and ordinances to older buildings. Use the State Historical Building Code for designated historic buildings.

The Uniform Building Code, adopted by the City Council, allows flexibility in the way that code requirements for repairs, alterations, and additions are applied to designated historic buildings. Since 1985, the State Historical Building Code has been mandatory for all agencies and jurisdictions in California with designated historic buildings.

Program L-66:

Revise existing zoning and permit regulations as needed to minimize constraints to adaptive reuse, particularly in retail areas.

Policy L-60:

Protect Palo Alto's archaeological resources.

The Palo Alto area is known to have been inhabited by indigenous people for many centuries prior to the arrival of the first Europeans. Discoveries of the "Stanford Man" skeletons near San Francisquito Creek at Stanford indicate human presence as early as 7,600 years ago. Over 50 archaeological surveys have been conducted in Palo Alto in association with specific projects but no systematic citywide survey aimed at locating all sites has been undertaken. There may still be undiscovered archaeological resources in many parts of the City. Such resources are most likely to occur near the original locations of streams and springs and northeast of El Camino Real near old tidelands.

See Map L-8 for known areas of archaeological sensitivity

Program L-67:

Using the archaeological sensitivity map in the Comprehensive Plan as a guide, continue to assess the need for archaeological surveys and mitigation plans on a project by project basis, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Historic Preservation Act.

Civic Uses

Goal L-8: Attractive and Safe Civic and Cultural Facilities Provided in All Neighborhoods and Maintained and Used in Ways that Foster and Enrich Public Life.

Palo Alto has a variety of schools, cultural, and civic facilities located throughout the community. These facilities can take on a more multifaceted role, serving as a center for public life in neighborhoods that do not have a commercial center close by. This role can be encouraged by physical changes that create informal gathering places, bicycle and pedestrian access, lighting for night time use, and in some cases, small-scale retail services such as cafes.

On Saturday mornings a civic facility is transformed into a public gathering place when people come to the colorful Farmer's Market held in this public parking lot.

See also Policy C-4 and associated programs on the use of schools for community purposes

POLICY L-61:

Promote the use of community and cultural centers, libraries, local schools, parks, and other community facilities as gathering places. Ensure that they are inviting and safe places that can deliver a variety of community services during both daytime and evening hours.

PROGRAM L-68:

To help satisfy present and future community use needs, coordinate with the School District to educate the public about and to plan for the future use of school sites, including providing space for public gathering places for neighborhoods lacking space.

PROGRAM L-69:

Enhance all entrances to Mitchell Park Community Center so that they are more inviting and facilitate public gatherings.

PROGRAM L-70:

Study the potential for landscaping or park furniture that would promote neighborhood parks as outdoor gathering places and centers of neighborhood activity.

POLICY L-62:

Provide comfortable seating areas and plazas with places for public art adjacent to library and community center entrances.

POLICY L-63:

Encourage small-scale local-serving retail services, such as small cafes, delicatessens, and coffee carts, in Civic Centers.

POLICY L-64:

Seek potential new sites for art and cultural facilities, public spaces, open space, and community gardens that encourage and support pedestrian and bicycle travel and person-to-person contact, particularly in neighborhoods that lack these amenities.

POLICY L-65:

Encourage religious and private institutions to provide facilities that promote a sense of community and are compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Public Ways

GOAL L-9: Attractive, Inviting Public Spaces and Streets that Enhance the Image and Character of the City.

Streets and Paths

POLICY L-66:

Maintain an aesthetically pleasing street network that helps frame and define the community while meeting the needs of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

As a public space, the street is one of the most important design elements that the City can control. Often, the character of the street is even more important than the buildings in forming the image of a particular neighborhood. In fact, Palo Alto's reputation as a gracious residential community is greatly enhanced by the pleasing qualities of its best streets fine street trees,

well-kept lawns, ample setbacks, and attractive planting areas. These qualities give many neighborhoods a memorable and distinctive character.

POLICY L-67:

Balance traffic circulation needs with the goal of creating walkable neighborhoods that are designed and oriented towards pedestrians.

A number of design components determine whether a street will be more than just a conduit for cars. They include its width; the proportion of areas reserved for pedestrians; the size, texture, and location of street trees and other plantings; provisions for bicycles; the height and setbacks of abutting buildings; changes in the ground plane at curbs; planting areas and crosswalks; the color and texture of paving materials; and the amount and speed of traffic. Many of Palo Alto's streets are exemplary civic spaces. Others, particularly those laid out after World War II, are too wide and encourage fast traffic. Such streets lack the proportions and sense of enclosure that make pedestrians feel comfortable. A few, like El Camino Real, serve only to move traffic and have a negative effect on community design.

See also Program L-32 on the South El Camino Real area Coordinated Area Plan

POLICY L-68:

Integrate creeks and green spaces with the street and pedestrian/bicycle path system.

Open spaces ranging from pocket parks to large community parks are interspersed throughout Palo Alto. In addition, portions of four creeks that run through the City remain in a natural condition. The parks and natural areas are an important part of the City's character and also provide habitat for wildlife. They bring the sounds and sights of nature into the urban environment, adding visual interest and enriching daily life in the city. Streets and paths should be located to take advantage of these areas and make them accessible on an everyday basis whenever possible. This has already been done at places like Timothy Hopkins Park and Palo Alto Avenue, located along San Francisquito Creek and providing a favorite location for strolling, jogging, sitting, and cycling. Other bicycle and pedestrian routes to popular destinations could also be designed to pass through parks or natural areas.

See Map L-4 for locations of natural creeks and open space areas. Also see Program L-41 on Matadero Creek restoration

Scenic Routes

POLICY L-69:

Preserve the scenic qualities of Palo Alto roads and trails for motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, and equestrians.

Page Mill Road/Oregon Expressway connects the City to the baylands and foothills, and provides one of several scenic routes in Palo Alto.

See Map L-4 showing community design features and the location of scenic routes

PROGRAM L-71:

Recognize Sand Hill Road, University Avenue, Embarcadero Road, Page Mill Road, Oregon Expressway, Interstate 280, Arastradero Road (west of Foothill Expressway), Junipero Serra Boulevard/Foothill Expressway, and Skyline Boulevard as scenic routes.

The roads described in Program L-71 have particularly high scenic value:

- **Sand Hill Road** provides a linkage between El Camino Real, a State Historic Route, and Interstate 280, a California Scenic Highway. The proposed intersection of Sand Hill Road and El Camino Real is located adjacent to the north gateway into Palo Alto at the San Francisquito Creek Bridge. It is here that the relationship of the scenic corridor to the creek is most obvious, as an approximately 1,500 foot long segment of wooded and riparian vegetation remains open to public views on the northwest side of the scenic route. The Sand Hill Road scenic corridor is designed to modern arterial standards, with development along major segments of its extent. Adjacent land uses include the Stanford Shopping Center, housing, medical, professional, research and development, and administrative office uses, among others. The scenic route is characterized by its broad setbacks and rural, oak-dominated landscaping. Informal groupings of oak trees, California natives, and eucalyptus set in natural grasses and wildflowers are the common landscape elements. Significant portions of the roadway are visually enhanced with planted medians, containing trees and shrubs that either extend the rural landscape theme, or provide a more formal landscape character, as in that portion of the route that adjoins the Stanford Shopping Center. As it approaches the scenic Junipero Serra Boulevard and Interstate 280, the undeveloped foothills are a significant scenic element of the background landscape.

- **University Avenue** extends from the Bayshore Freeway west to El Camino Real. Northeast of Middlefield Road, it is a curving street lined with gracious magnolia trees. Stately residences like the historic Squire House make University Avenue a visually striking and memorable entrance to Palo Alto. West of Middlefield, the street traverses Downtown. For several blocks, it is lined with sycamore trees and attractive historic and modern buildings. Further west, it leads into Palm Drive, the formal entrance to Stanford University.

- **Embarcadero Road** from Harbor Road to El Camino Real provides the main access to the Palo Alto baylands. West of the Bayshore Freeway, the road is lined with trees and several homes of historic interest and serves as a secondary entrance to Stanford University. Northeast of the Freeway, the road affords expansive views of open space as well as the site of historic Wilson's Landing.

- **Page Mill Road/Oregon Expressway** link the Bayshore Freeway to Interstate 280. Northeast of El Camino Real, a wide right-of-way and ample landscaping make the Oregon Expressway portion of the corridor visually pleasing. Further west, the corridor has wide setbacks within Stanford Research Park. Design requirements imposed by Stanford University have set a high aesthetic standard for this segment. West of Interstate 280, Page Mill Road climbs steeply through native woodlands and grasslands towards Skyline Boulevard. Views are exhilarating as one approaches Skyline Boulevard. Skyline is a State-designated scenic highway.

- **Arastradero Road** winds through the lower foothills and leads to scenic Alpine Road in Portola Valley. To protect views and scenic qualities, Palo Alto has established a 200-foot setback along upper Page Mill Road, Skyline Boulevard, and the portion of Arastradero Road in the lower foothills.
- **Foothill Expressway-Junipero Serra Boulevard** is extensively bordered by undeveloped Stanford lands. Where development exists, large setback requirements maintain a rural character on the western edge of the City.

Street Trees

POLICY L-70:

Enhance the appearance of streets and other public spaces by expanding and maintaining Palo Alto's street tree system.

Regularly spaced street trees provide coherence and help make the street memorable. This is especially important where buildings are not a consistent scale and style.

Palo Alto is fortunate to have an excellent street tree system with many positive design qualities. Regular spacing of trees that are similar in form and texture provides order and coherence and gives scale to the street. A canopy of branches and leaves provides shade for pedestrians and creates a sense of enclosure and comfort. On the City's most memorable streets, trees of a single species are planted at regular intervals, usually 25 to 30 feet apart. They often continue to the corners of blocks, reducing the apparent width of streets and intersections and defining the street as a continuous space. Protecting, maintaining, and enhancing the street tree system is among the most effective ways to improve the appearance of the City.

See Map L-4 for the location of primary community gateways

POLICY L-71:

Strengthen the identity of important community gateways, including the entrances to the City at Highway 101, El Camino Real and Middlefield Road; the Caltrain stations; entries to commercial districts; and Embarcadero Road at El Camino Real.

Community identity is strengthened when the entrances to the City are clear and memorable. One entrance in particular targeted for improvement is the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station. A Coordinated Area Plan for this area offers a long-term solution, but there are also short-term measures that should be pursued. Minor changes to sidewalks and planting areas at University and Alma could provide a safer, more inviting pedestrian connection between the Transit Station and University Avenue/Downtown.

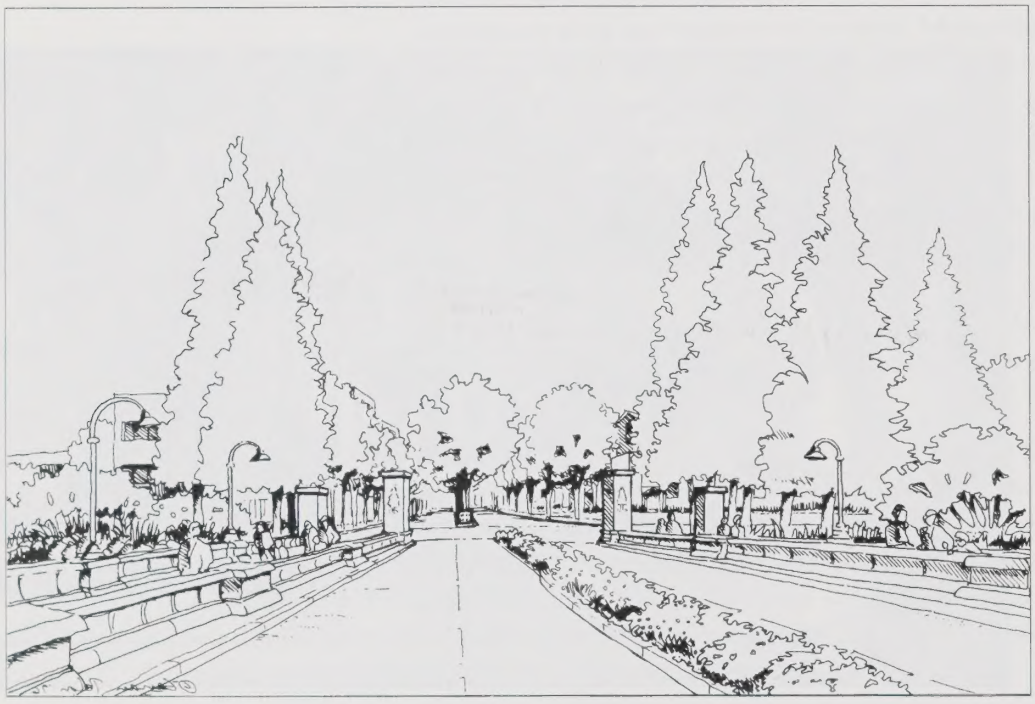


Illustration by Canan Tolon

The south gateway to the City on El Camino Real should be strengthened with a variety of improvements, including a new entry sign, landscaping of the median, and new trees.

PROGRAM L-72:

Develop a strategy to enhance gateway sites with special landscaping, art, public spaces, and/or public buildings. Emphasize the creek bridges and riparian settings at the entrances to the City over Adobe Creek and San Francisquito Creek.

Natural features like creeks make particularly evocative boundaries. The City is fortunate to have portions of both its northern and southern borders formed by creeks. There are opportunities for distinctive gateways that highlight the connection between the City and its natural setting at the bridges across these creeks on El Camino Real, Sand Hill Road, Middlefield Road, University Avenue, and Chaucer Street.

POLICY L-72:

Promote and maintain public art and cultural facilities throughout Palo Alto. Ensure that such projects are compatible with the character and identity of the surrounding neighborhood.

Palo Alto has a tradition of enriching public spaces with works of art, ranging from the subtle inclusion of hand crafted artifacts into building architecture to the more traditional displays of sculpture at civic locations. While the City has no public art requirement, there is a growing public sentiment to explore new ways to integrate artwork into new development projects.

For more about Palo Alto's rich collection of public art, log on to the City of Palo Alto website, arts and culture page: www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/palo/city/artsculture/welcome.html

POLICY L-73:

Consider public art and cultural facilities as a public benefit in connection with new development projects. Consider incentives for including public art in large development projects.

Some private and public development projects now include some form of artwork that enlivens public spaces. A series of amusing trompe l'oeil paintings on Downtown buildings painted by artist Greg Brown was originally done in the 1970s. The paintings are now so popular that private developers have begun adding to the series. The City Utilities Department, in 1993, used a whimsically painted temporary fence rather than a more traditional fence to enclose an electrical substation. The goal is to seize every opportunity to provide art in public places throughout the City.

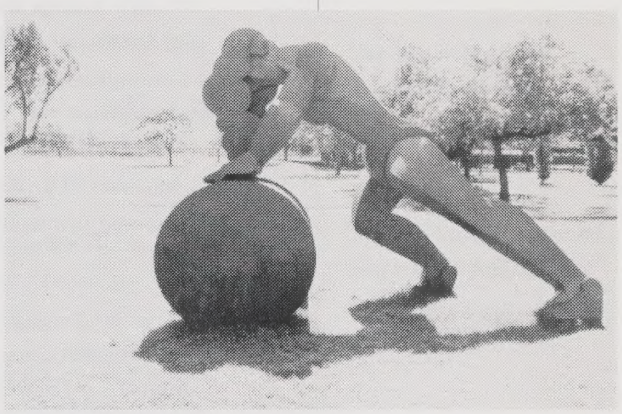


Photo courtesy of Arts and Culture Division

POLICY L-74:

Use the work of artists, craftspeople, architects, and landscape architects in the design and improvement of public spaces.

Public art can enrich any environment, whether the setting is urban, suburban or natural.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Parking Lots

POLICY L-75:

Minimize the negative physical impacts of parking lots. Locate parking behind buildings or underground wherever possible.

Parking lots occupy large amounts of surface area in the City. They should be viewed as opportunities for open space and outdoor amenities rather than just repositories for cars. Consider including public art in parking lots and parking structures.

PROGRAM L-73:

Revise the Zoning Ordinance to require the location of parking lots behind buildings rather than in front of them, under appropriate conditions.

PROGRAM L-74:

Modify zoning standards pertaining to parking lot layout and landscaping for land uses within Employment Districts.

POLICY L-76:

Require trees and other landscaping within parking lots.

Parking lots should be designed to include trees and landscaping. They should be pleasant for pedestrians and designed to encourage travel on foot to other destinations after arrival.

PROGRAM L-75:

Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments for parking lot landscaping, including requiring a variety of drought-tolerant, relatively litter-free tree species capable of forming a 50 percent tree canopy within 10 to 15 years. Consider further amendments that would require existing nonconforming lots to come into compliance wherever possible.

POLICY L-77:

Encourage alternatives to surface parking lots to minimize the amount of land that must be devoted to parking, provided that economic and traffic safety goals can still be achieved.

PROGRAM L-76:

Evaluate parking requirements and actual parking needs for specific uses. Develop design criteria based on a standard somewhere between average and peak conditions.

PROGRAM L-77:

Revise parking requirements to encourage creative solutions such as valet parking, landscaped parking reserves, satellite parking, and others that minimize the use of open land for parking.

PROGRAM L-78:

Encourage the use of Planned Community (PC) zoning for parking structures Downtown and in the California Avenue area.

POLICY L-78:

Encourage development that creatively integrates parking into the project by providing for shared use of parking areas.

POLICY L-79:

Design public infrastructure, including paving, signs, utility structures, parking garages and parking lots to meet high quality urban design standards. Look for opportunities to use art and artists in the design of public infrastructure. Remove or mitigate elements of existing infrastructure that are unsightly or visually disruptive.

See also Program N-34 on permeable paving materials.

Capital improvement projects represent substantial public investments. Areas of high pedestrian traffic, especially Centers, should have priority for infrastructure repair. While the purpose of infrastructure is usually utilitarian or functional, attention to design details can add beauty to the City or even remedy an urban design defect. For example, replacing a sidewalk can provide an opportunity to create larger tree wells and provide new street trees.

PROGRAM L-79:

Undertake a coordinated effort by the Public Works, Utilities, and Planning Departments to establish design standards for public infrastructure and examine the effectiveness of City street, sidewalk and street tree maintenance programs.

See also Policy L-22 regarding sidewalk repair.

PROGRAM L-80:

Continue the citywide undergrounding of utility wires. Minimize the impacts of undergrounding on street tree root systems and planting areas.

See also Policy C-24 and Policy N-24 and related Programs on maintenance of City infrastructure.

PROGRAM L-81:

Encourage the use of compact and well-designed utility elements, such as transformers, switching devices, and backflow preventers. Place these elements in locations that will minimize their visual intrusion.

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

The distinction between the urban and open space portions of Palo Alto is apparent in this aerial photograph. It covers all of Palo Alto and its environs.

Source: United States Geological Survey

Approximate Scale:

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map L-1

Aerial Photo

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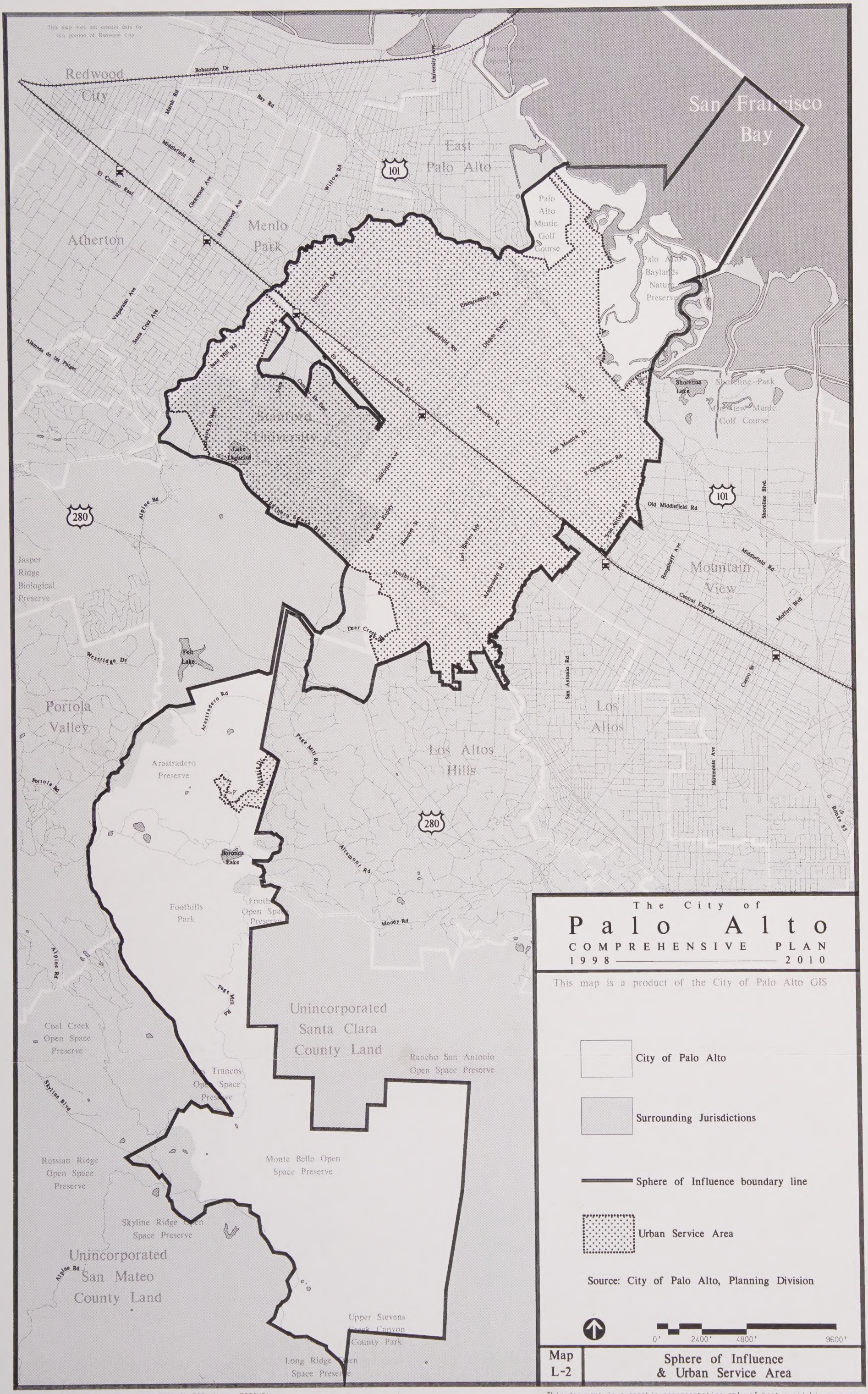

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Date: 02FEB98-14.19.30 By: HUMBLE

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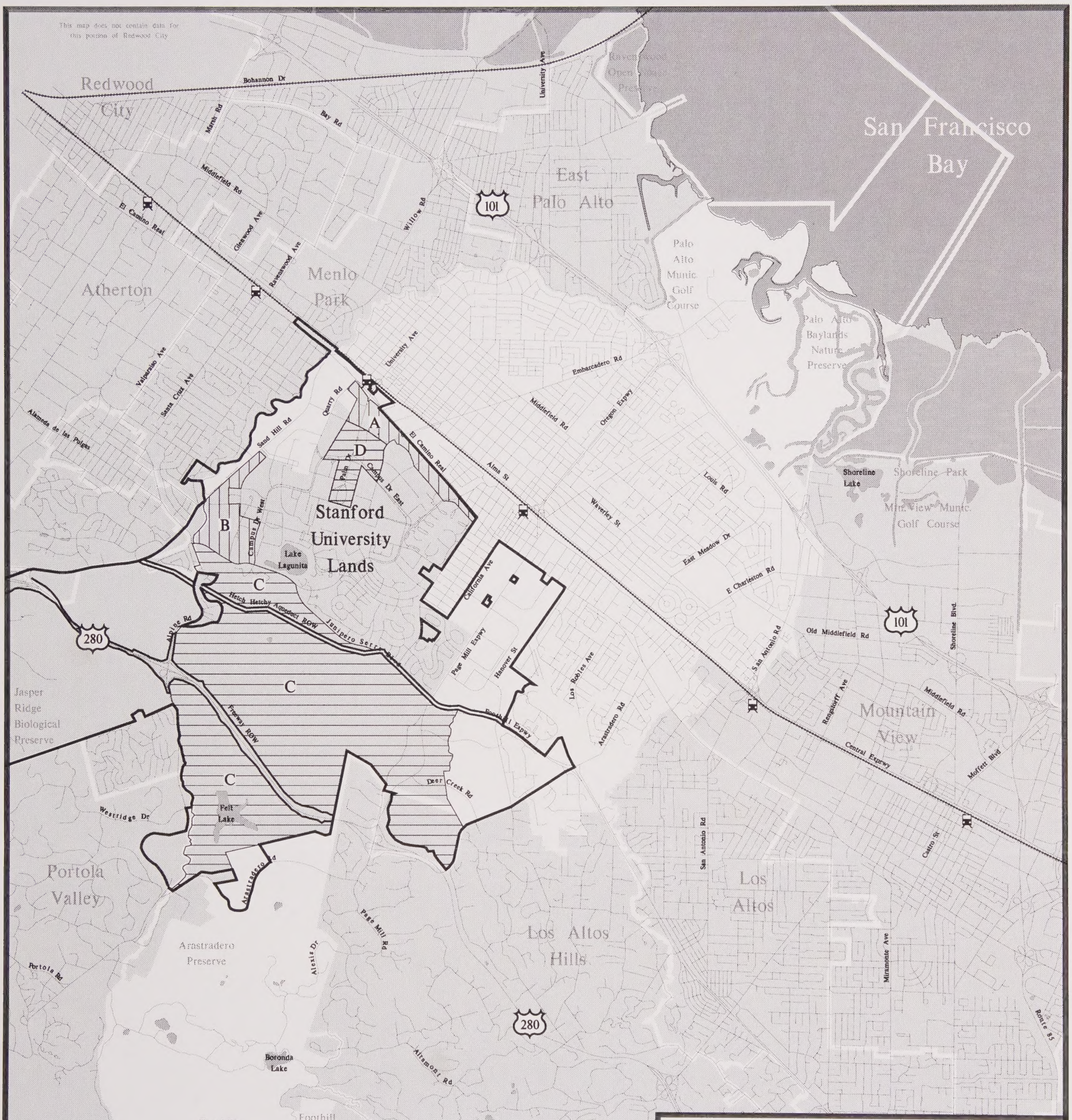

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

City of Palo Alto

Surrounding Jurisdictions

Stanford University Lands boundary line

Stanford General Use Permit Special Condition Areas (Areas A,B,C & D)

Source: City of Palo Alto, Planning Division
Stanford University Planning Office

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map L-3

Stanford University Lands

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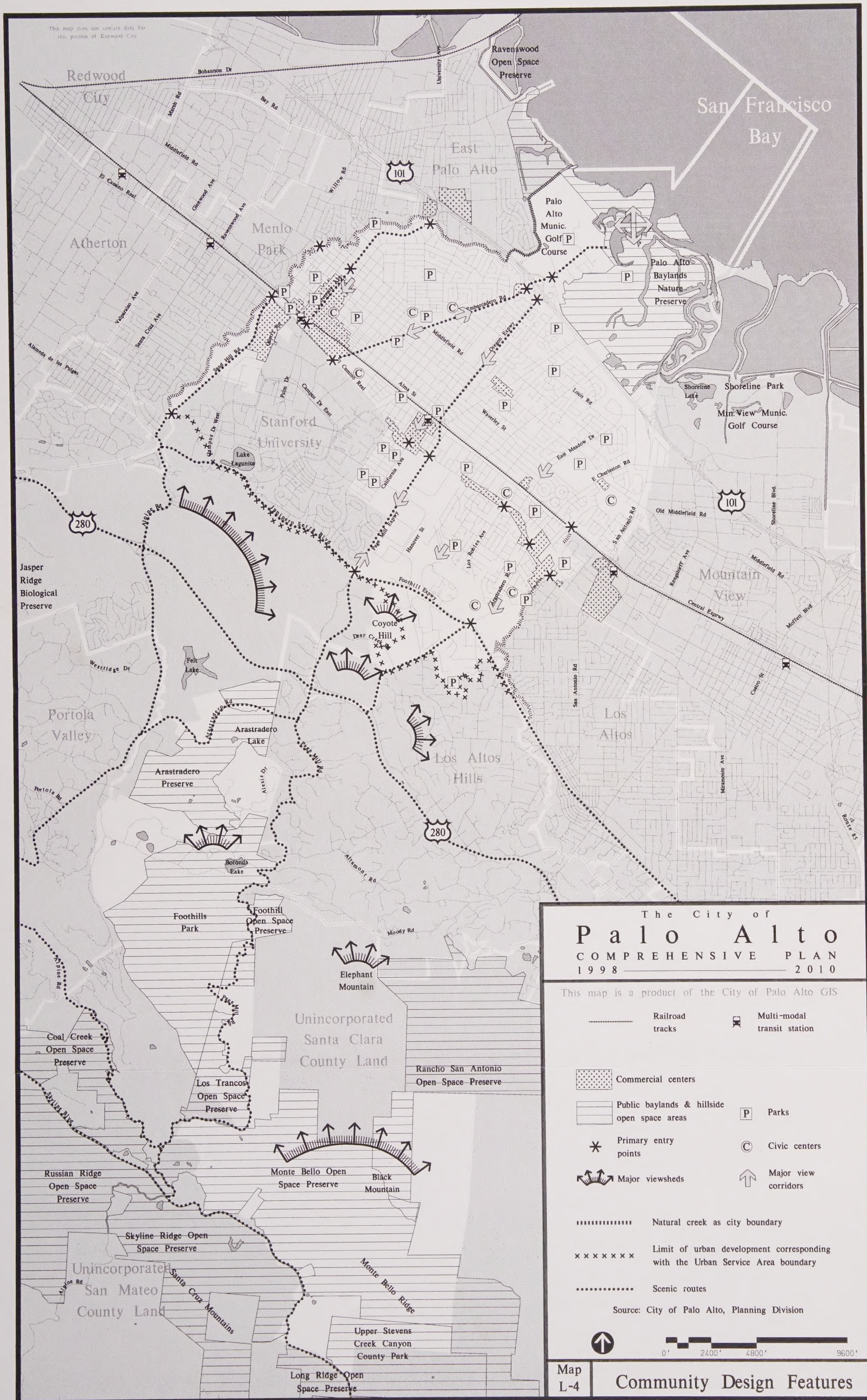

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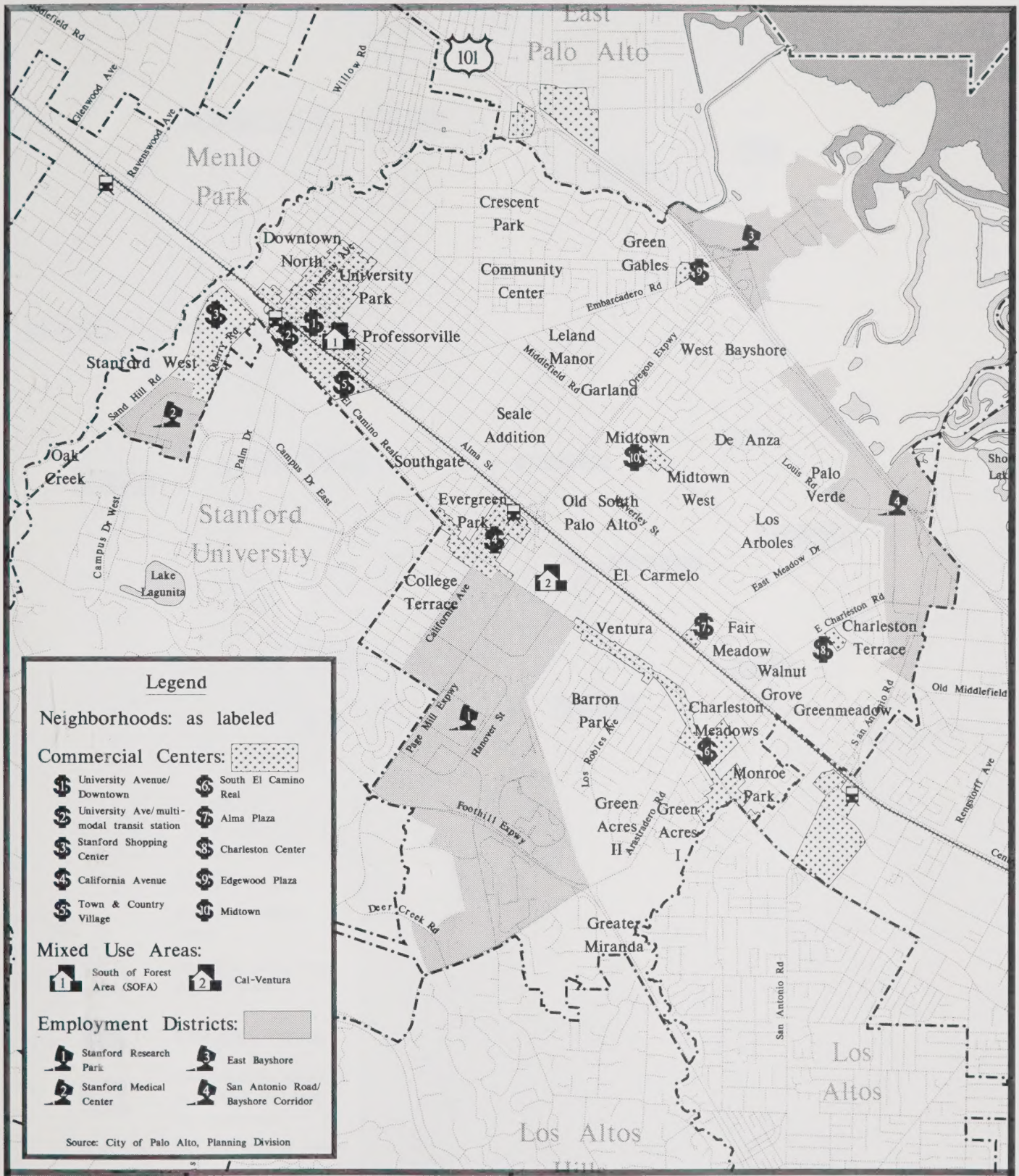

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

Map L-5

City Structure - Neighborhoods - Centers - Districts

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Date: 03FEB98-09.49.20 By: DASCOMBE

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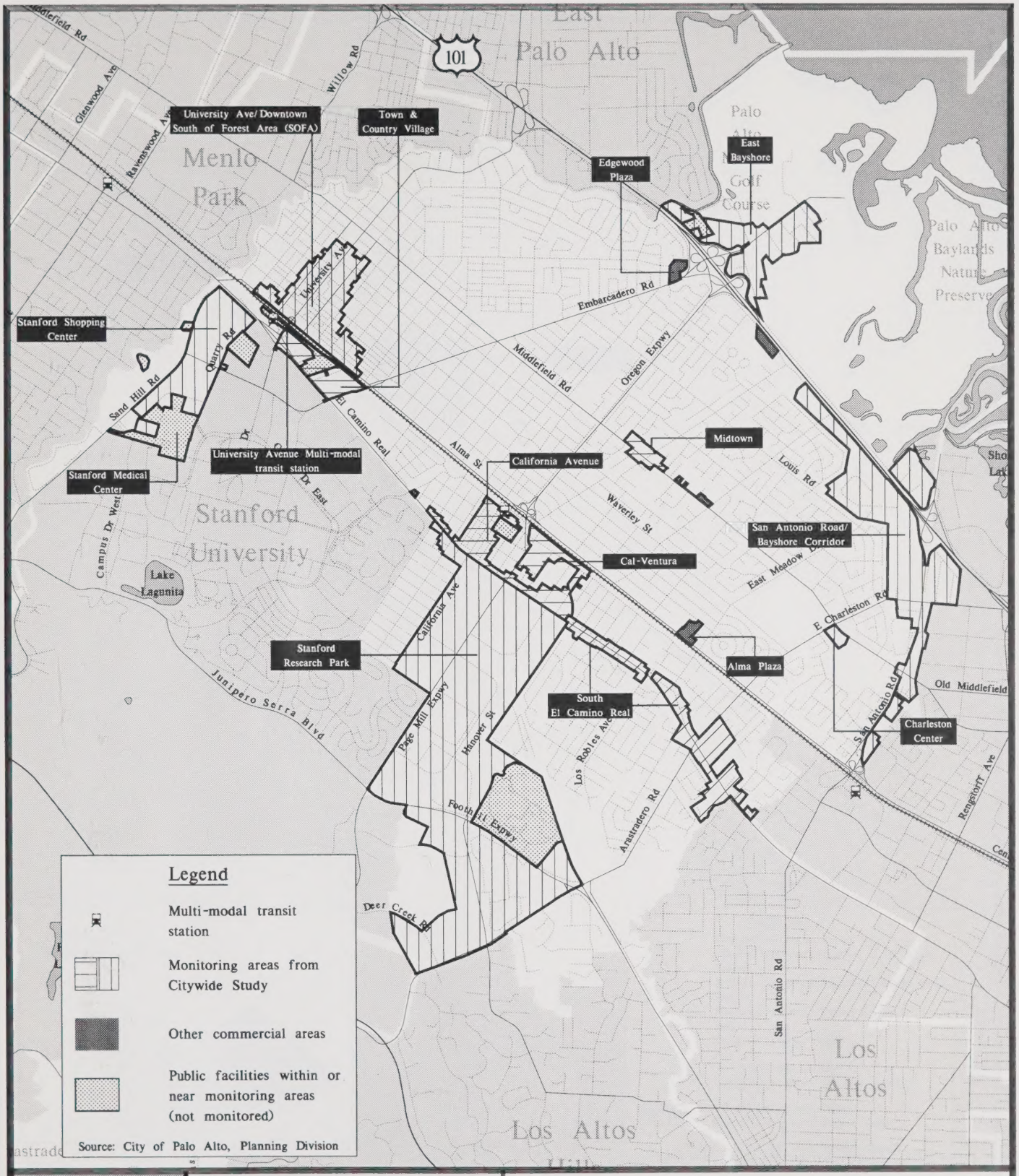

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

Map L-6

Commercial Growth Monitoring Areas from Citywide Study

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Date: 03FEB98-10.12.40 By: DASCOMBE

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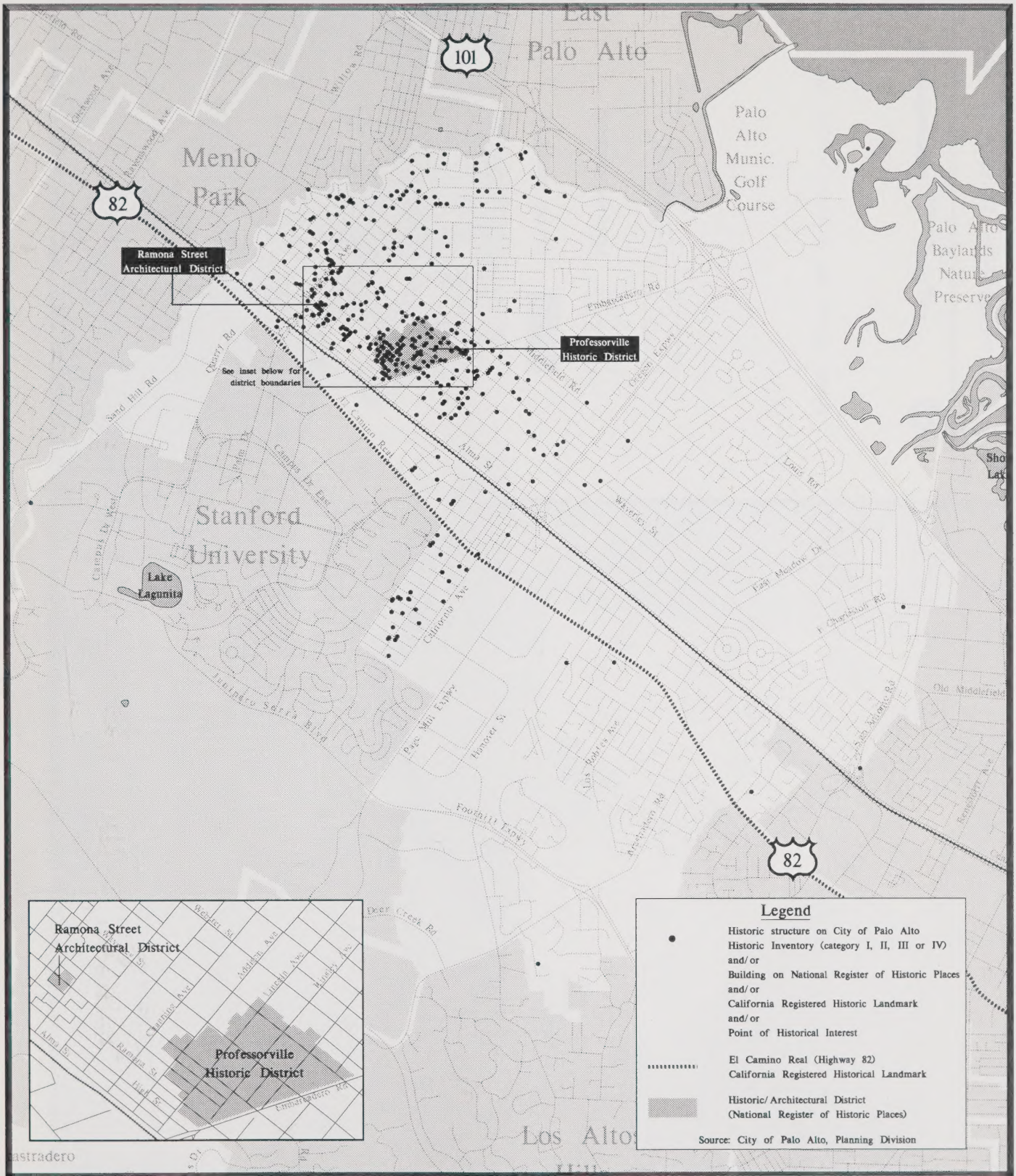

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The City of

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

Map L-7

Cultural Resources

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[000000.COMPPLAN]CULTURAL.FGB View: PCULTURE
Date: 05FEB98-13.04.10 By: DASCOMBE

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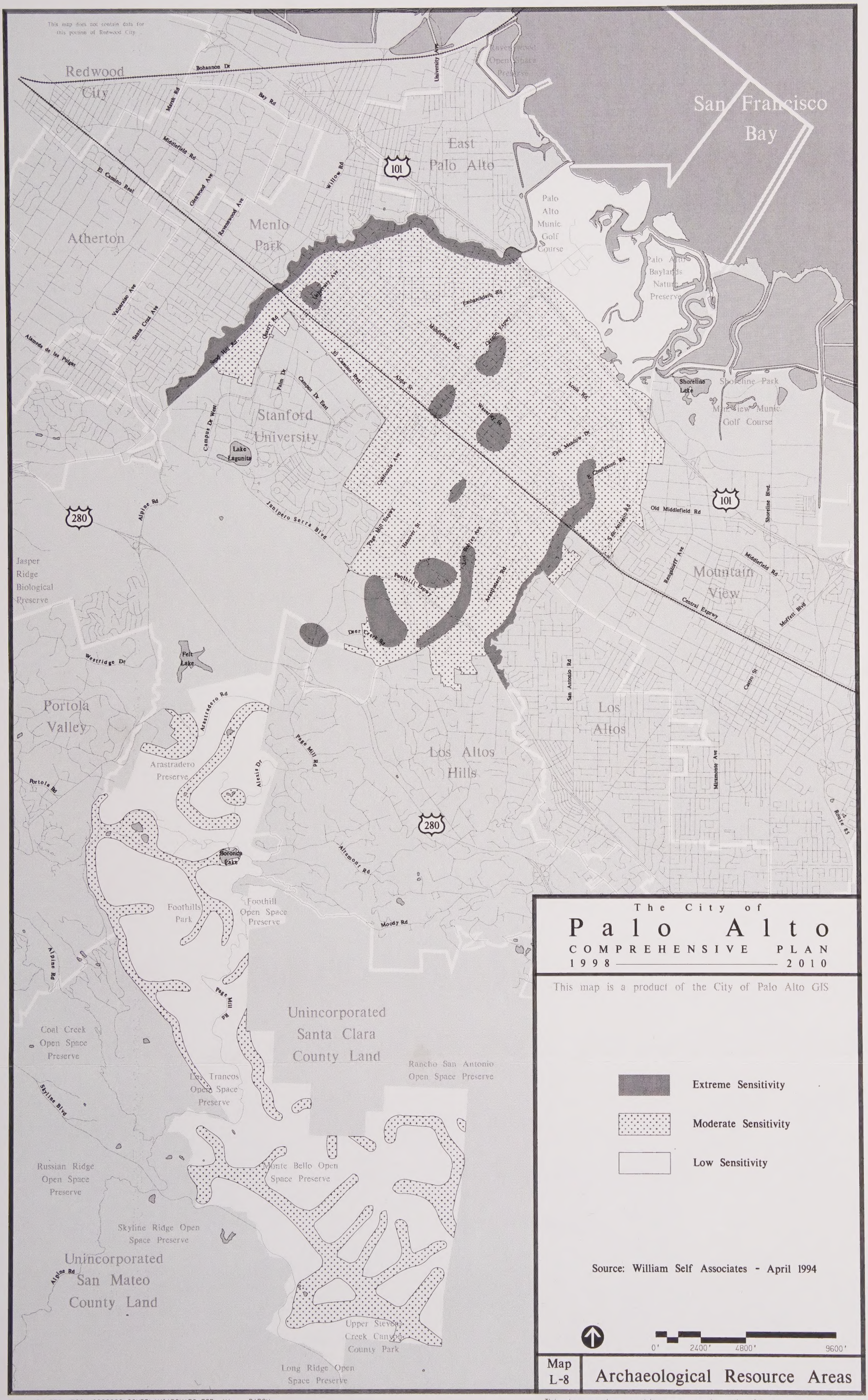

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

- Extreme Sensitivity
- Moderate Sensitivity
- Low Sensitivity

Source: William Self Associates - April 1994

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map L-8

Archaeological Resource Areas

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[000000.COMPPLAN]ARCHAEO.FGB View: PARCH
Date: 02FEB98-11.08.20 By: DASCOMBE

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This map does not contain data for this portion of Redwood City

Owner: Leland Stanford Jr. Univ.
Size: 10.291 acres

Owner: Jacqueline Bressler
Size: 13.27 acres

Owner: Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club, Inc.
Size: 125.572 acres

Owner: Multiple Owners (11 properties)
Size: 117.553 acres

Owner: Karen Christensen
Size: 11 acres

Owner: Jeffry & Monsen Maren Grainger
Size: 20.73 acres

Owner: William & Patricia Smith
Size: 8.722 acres

Owner: Irene Fogarty Trustee, et al
Size: 147.71 acres

Owner: Harvey & Pamela Loucks
Size: 32.56 acres

The City of Palo Alto COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

Williamson Act Properties

Owner:
Site:
Label showing Owner and Size of property

Source: City of Palo Alto, Planning Division

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map L-9

Williamson Act Properties in Palo Alto (1997)

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[000000.COMPPLAN]WACT.FGB View: PWACT
Date: 05FEB98-12.42.10 By: DASCOMBE

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3 Transportation

Vision Statement

Palo Alto will provide accessible, attractive, economically viable and environmentally sound transportation options that meet the needs of residents, employers, employees and visitors for safe, convenient and efficient travel by a variety of methods. Streets will be safe and attractive, and designed to enhance the quality and aesthetics of Palo Alto neighborhoods. Emphasis will be placed on alternatives to the automobile, including walking, bicycling, public transit, and car and van pooling. The adverse impacts of automobile traffic on the environment in general, and residential streets in particular, will be reduced. Solutions that reduce the growth in the number of automobiles on City streets, calm or slow traffic, and save energy will be supported. It is hoped that individuals will reduce their automobile trips by 10 percent by 2010, as alternative transportation methods are implemented. The City will seek out innovative funding sources and approaches to construct and maintain needed transportation systems. Palo Alto recognizes the regional nature of our transportation system, and will be a leader in seeking regional transportation solutions through long-term planning.

Introduction

Meeting the transportation needs of residents, visitors, and businesses calls for comprehensive and forward-looking solutions. The Transportation Element provides a policy and program framework for these solutions. The Element recognizes that future growth in transportation needs cannot be met by the automobile alone. Strong dependence on the automobile has resulted in air and water pollution, excess noise, increased energy use, and visual degradation in Palo Alto and throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. There have also been impacts on Palo Alto neighborhoods, as motorists have used local streets as alternatives to overcrowded arterials.

This Plan is designed to address these issues comprehensively. Although it is intended to guide decisions over the life of this Plan, Palo Alto must make long term plans and lay the groundwork for the distant future–even 50 years out. The City must develop transportation systems that serve local, intercity and regional travel, and make investments in infrastructure that will lead to a truly integrated system. For example, a local serving shuttle system is envisioned to begin operation by 2000.

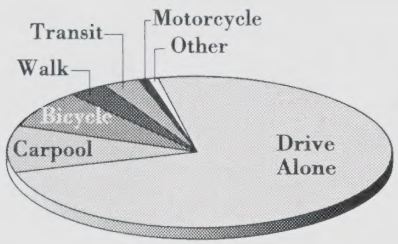
This Element meets the State requirement for a Circulation Element. The following pages address the various aspects of circulation, including roadways, public transit, walking, bicycling, parking, special transportation needs, and aviation.

Reducing Auto Use

Goal T-1 Less Reliance on Single-Occupant Vehicles

On a typical day in 1995, some 600,000 one-way car trips were made in the Palo Alto/Stanford area. About ninety percent of these trips were generated by residential and commercial activities within the area; the remaining ten percent were through trips that neither originated nor ended in Palo Alto or Stanford. Palo Alto and Stanford are thus responsible for most of the travel in the area and can influence future traffic conditions through their policies.

How People Get to Work in the Palo Alto/Stanford Area



- Drive Alone – 74%
- Carpool – 9.5%
- Bicycle – 8.5%
- Walk – 3.5%
- Transit – 3.5%
- Motorcycle – 0.5%
- Other – 0.5%

Source: 1990 US Census

An additional 150,000 daily trips were made by car pool passengers, public transit riders, bicyclists, and pedestrians. The number of trips made in single occupant cars increased by about five percent between 1980 and 1990. Now more than ever, single occupant cars dominate Palo Alto's, and the region's, transportation systems and urban environment. This has a number of consequences, including increased time delays, energy consumption, air pollution and neighborhood impacts. One of the greatest challenges during the life of this Plan will be to lower the number of drive-alone trips in Palo Alto.

The figures in this chart represent people who work in the Palo Alto/Stanford area regardless of where they live, plus Palo Alto/Stanford area residents working elsewhere. Currently, most of them get to their work place by driving alone.

See also the Land Use and Community Design and Natural Environment Elements, and especially Policies L-9, L-11, L-19, L-24, L-27, L-31, L-35, L-39, L-40, L-42, L-43, L-45, L-67, N-28, and associated programs

Policy T-1:

Make land use decisions that encourage walking, bicycling, and public transit use.

Transportation and land use are inextricably linked. Low-density land use patterns generally dictate the use of an automobile, while higher density and mixed use patterns generally translate into higher transit usage and pedestrian activity. Transit stations and bus routes present opportunities for higher density development. Palo Alto recognizes the relationship between transportation and land use and will promote a land use pattern that supports walking, bicycling, and reduced dependence on cars.

Program T-1:

Encourage infill, redevelopment, and reuse of vacant or underutilized parcels employing minimum density requirements that are appropriate to support transit, bicycling, and walking.

PROGRAM T-2:

Promote mixed use development to provide housing and commercial services near employment centers, thereby reducing the necessity of driving.

PROGRAM T-3:

Locate higher density development along transit corridors and near multi-modal transit stations.

See also Policies L-27 and L-31 on land use around the multi-modal transit stations

By locating higher density housing around transit stations, Palo Alto can provide more housing while reducing the number of auto trips per household.

POLICY T-2:

Consider economic, environmental, and social cost issues in local transportation decisions.

See also Policy T-50 on market pricing

The real costs of transportation are typically much greater than the costs borne by the actual users. Few of these costs are actually paid by the users on a per trip or per mile basis. For instance, drivers do not pay directly for the impacts of air pollution, the cost of enforcing traffic safety laws, or the land or materials needed for new roads and parking. These costs, and other impacts on society, should be considered as future transportation decisions are made.

PROGRAM T-4:

Consider the use of additional parking fees and tax revenues to fund alternative transportation projects.

Parking fees could help fund other transportation modes that have fewer negative impacts. This approach has been used by Stanford University to finance its local shuttle system.

POLICY T-3:

Support the development and expansion of comprehensive, effective programs to reduce auto use at both local and regional levels.

See Goals T-2 and T-3 for additional policies and programs to reduce reliance on single occupancy vehicles

Simply put, traffic congestion can be reduced by eliminating the need to travel or at least eliminating the necessity of traveling alone. A variety of strategies will be used to reduce auto use, including carpooling, fees, increased emphasis on electronic information services, and educating residents and those who work in and visit Palo Alto to use transportation alternatives and to change their transportation habits. An increasing share of personal and business services, such as library book renewal and retail purchases, will be provided by computer and telephone. Private delivery services can reduce the need for "errand-running" trips. Telecommuting can also reduce trips and may ultimately enable some households to reduce the number of cars they own.

PROGRAM T-5:

Work with private interests, such as the Chamber of Commerce and major institutions, to develop and coordinate trip reduction strategies.

Businesses can organize trip reduction programs in which employees are given a variety of incentives to reduce driving during the peak times. Such incentives could include flexible schedules, staggered work hours, telecommuting, transit subsidies, preferential parking for car pools, provision of bicycle parking and showers (for cyclists and pedestrians), and others.

PROGRAM T-6:

Expand Palo Alto's carpooling incentive programs.

PROGRAM T-7:

Encourage the Palo Alto Unified School District to use parking fees, regulations, and education to discourage students from driving to school.

Photo courtesy of Tri Mel's Creative Services

Transit, parking, and highway information can be computerized and located in prominent public locations like these in Portland, Oregon. Transit and driving trips can be planned on the spot, using continuously updated information

PROGRAM T-8:

Create a long-term education program to change the travel habits of residents, visitors and workers by informing them about transportation alternatives, incentives and impacts. Work with the Palo Alto Unified School District and with private interests, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to develop and implement this program.

A decrease in automobile use can occur very quickly if people consciously plan to make fewer vehicle trips each week. Public education has proved successful in changing peoples' habits and ways of thinking; for example, environmental education has helped increase the rate of recycling. In conjunction with improved transportation options, transportation education can help reduce individual vehicle trips and increase the demand for transit options.

PROGRAM T-9:

Support the development of regional on-line transportation services to provide current information on transit, parking, and roadway conditions, as well as computerized trip planning. Provide information kiosks at locations such as University and California Avenues.

PROGRAM T-10:

Expand the range of City services that can be received via computers or through the mail.

PROGRAM T-11:

Promote private delivery services to reduce the necessity of driving.

PROGRAM T-12:

Encourage telecommuting, satellite office concepts, and work-at-home options.

GOAL T-2: A Convenient, Efficient, Public Transit System that Provides a Viable Alternative to Driving

Palo Alto is served by the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans), Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), Caltrain, Dumbarton Bridge Bus Service, and Stanford's Marguerite Shuttle. All of these services converge at the University Avenue/Multi-modal Transit Station. The California Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station serves as a secondary transfer center. A third Caltrain Station is on San Antonio Road near the Mountain View border.

Caltrain arrives at the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station, the second busiest station on the Caltrain system. Over 2,000 commuters come and go on a typical weekday.

Photo courtesy of San Mateo County Transit

Caltrain is Palo Alto's primary regional transit service, with riders traveling to San Francisco, Gilroy, and all cities in between. On a city-by-city basis, Palo Alto is the second largest generator of weekday Caltrain trips, behind only San Francisco and ahead of larger cities such as San Jose, San Mateo, and Sunnyvale. Long-range plans for the Palo Alto station and adjacent University Avenue underpass area will enhance pedestrian circulation and the prominence and visibility of the transit station, creating a vital link between Stanford and the University Avenue/Downtown area and further increasing transit usage.

Even with the relatively high level of public transit service in Palo Alto, ridership has traditionally been low compared to other modes. Transit currently attracts only one third the trips that walking and bicycling do. While intercity transit ridership is relatively stable (Caltrain and Dumbarton Bridge ridership are increasing), service on County-operated local bus routes has been reduced due to low ridership and lack of funding. Local shuttle buses, upgraded Caltrain service, and regional light rail extensions offer some promise of improving service and enabling ridership to grow in the future.

POLICY T-4:

Provide local transit in Palo Alto.

PROGRAM T-13:

Establish a jitney bus system similar to Stanford University's Marguerite Shuttle.

Photo courtesy of Palo Alto Weekly—taken by Joe Melena

Stanford's popular free shuttle service is a model that many Palo Alto residents would like to see expanded. A similar system, or even an expansion of the Marguerite Shuttle itself, could connect Palo Alto's neighborhoods with local destinations and multi-modal transit stations.

Many citizens feel that a user-friendly locally operated service would be well received and more heavily used than the County bus service. Stanford has indicated that it would like to expand the Marguerite service into Palo Alto. Regardless of who operates the system, it should provide frequent service in both directions on one or more neighborhood loops and among the multi-modal transit stations, Stanford Shopping Center, and Downtown.

POLICY T-5:

Support continued development and improvement of the University Avenue and California Avenue Multi-modal Transit Stations, and the San Antonio Road Station as important transportation nodes for the City.

See also Policy L-27 and Programs L-25 and L-26

PROGRAM T-14:

Pursue development of the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station conceptual plan based on the 1993-1994 design study.

The 1993-1994 design study addressed the area bounded by Alma Street and El Camino Real, from San Francisquito Creek to Embarcadero Road. Alma Street, El Camino Real, and the Caltrain tracks are significant barriers to accessing the area, particularly since University Avenue is the only through street. The lack of a continuous local street through the area and the looping configuration of University Circle on both sides of the Caltrain tracks contribute to the awkwardness and inefficiency of circulation through the core of the site. Pedestrian and bicycle access to and through the area is difficult and unpleasant. Major activity centers like Stanford University, Stanford Shopping Center, and University Avenue/Downtown are close by, but there are few connecting routes. The 1993-1994 design study resulted in a long-range plan that would provide more travel options through the area and improve connections within the area.

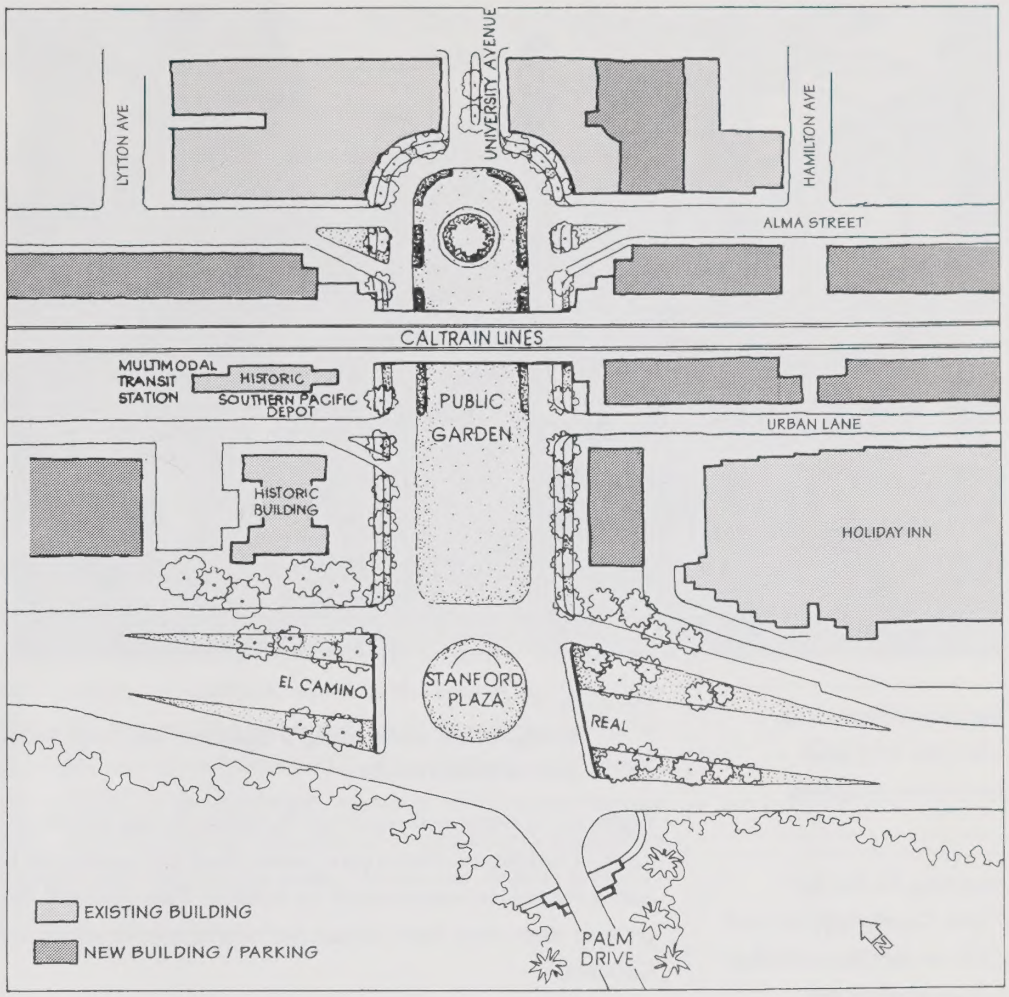


Illustration by Canan Tolon

The University Avenue Multi-Modal Transit Station Area may be transformed in the future. This conceptual diagram shows possible improvements that would make walking and bicycling between downtown Palo Alto and Stanford a more attractive, convenient option.

PROGRAM T-15:

Improve the environment at the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station, including connecting tunnels, through short-term improvements and regular maintenance.

Given the long-range nature of the station area redesign project, short-term improvements should be made to improve the current commute environment. These could include improved signage, painting, landscaping and lighting, and the addition of commuter-oriented retail services. Improved maintenance is needed to address cleanliness, graffiti, painting, and lighting.

Also see perspective view of this area near Policy L-27

POLICY T-6:

Improve public transit access to regional destinations, including those within Palo Alto.

POLICY T-7:

Support plans for a quiet, fast rail system that encircles the Bay, and for intra-county and transbay transit systems that link Palo Alto to the rest of Santa Clara County and adjoining counties.

Photo courtesy of the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

Light rail transit, seen here in San Jose, can provide superior transit service in high ridership corridors. Light rail could be extended north from Mountain View into Palo Alto and Menlo Park, providing another transit option.

See also Policies L-35, L-36 and B-25 and associated programs

See Map T-1 for Santa Clara County light rail and Caltrain facilities and Map T-2 for existing and potential light rail regional transit facilities

PROGRAM T-16:

Evaluate the extension of a light rail line from Mountain View through Palo Alto to Menlo Park.

Light rail is perceived positively by residents and has been enjoying a renaissance in many parts of California. Santa Clara County light rail is expected to reach Mountain View in 2000, and a logical extension would be north to Palo Alto and Menlo Park. The extension would provide more stops than Caltrain and would provide access to many destinations not served by Caltrain.

PROGRAM T-17:

Support Caltrain electrification and its extension to downtown San Francisco.

Palo Alto supports the extension of Caltrain to downtown San Francisco to provide a regional transit connection for the Peninsula. The City supports electrification of Caltrain to speed service, allow for more trains, and decrease noise and air pollution. Extension of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) service is an alternative to upgrading Caltrain but would be significantly more expensive and would take a long time to build.

POLICY T-8:

Encourage employers to develop shuttle services connecting employment areas with the multi-modal transit stations and business districts.

See Maps T-3 and T-4 showing existing and potential local transit services

Several employers already provide such services for commuters during the peak periods. By routing shuttle service through the multi-modal stations, employees living in Palo Alto could connect with local transit serving Palo Alto neighborhoods.

POLICY T-9:

Work towards integrating public school commuting into the local transit system.

Free school busing is no longer provided to Palo Alto schools. This has resulted in more parents driving their children to school during the morning commute period. These extra trips have exacerbated the poor traffic conditions at many major intersections and created additional

traffic congestion and safety problems in the vicinity of schools. Palo Alto will strive to serve a portion of the school population through new and existing local transit services.

POLICY T-10:

Encourage amenities such as seating, lighting, and signage at bus stops to increase rider comfort and safety.

Providing attractive places to wait can reduce the stigma sometimes associated with public transportation.

POLICY T-11:

Support efforts to integrate train, bus, and shuttle schedules at multi-modal transit stations to make public transit use more time-efficient.

POLICY T-12:

Support efforts to decrease wait times for intercity transit to a maximum of 20 minutes between 6:00 AM and 10:00 PM. Design for a maximum wait time of 12 minutes for intra-city transit, if feasible.

Increased service frequency is one way to decrease waiting times. If more frequent service is infeasible, timed transfers between transit systems can help increase efficiency. This becomes more complicated when several operators are involved, which is the case at the University Avenue/Multi-modal Station. Some existing services run every five or ten minutes during the peak hour but decrease to frequencies of one to two hours during off-peak periods. A 20-minute interval, similar to what is used by BART, is the maximum interval at which riders can stop worrying about timetables. Waiting times for intra-city trips should be even shorter since riders are making shorter trips and have less tolerance for long waits. The obvious obstacle to obtaining these service levels is high cost.

POLICY T-13:

Encourage a responsive private sector taxi service.

BICYCLING AND WALKING

GOAL T-3: Facilities, Services, and Programs that Encourage and Promote Walking and Bicycling

Palo Alto dedicated its formal bicycle system—one of the nation's first—in 1972. Bicycle facilities have since become commonplace in surrounding cities and considerable progress has been made in overcoming barriers to bicycle travel in and around Palo Alto. Palo Alto's bicycle system consists of on-road bicycle lanes and routes, off-road bicycle and pedestrian paths and bridges, a bicycle boulevard, and bicycle parking facilities. Highlights of the system are 14 underpasses and bridges, spanning barriers such as freeways, creeks, and railroad tracks. The City has received national recognition as a leader in the development of innovative bicycle projects and programs. Palo Alto is in a position to significantly increase its proportion of travel by bicycle. Its flat terrain, mild weather, grid street network, and environmentally- and health-conscious citizenry make cycling a practical option at a minimal cost. Future challenges include more routes for northeast-southwest travel and overcoming physical barriers like the Caltrain tracks and freeways. Better provisions for bicycles on public transit would promote both modes by overcoming some of the drawbacks of each.

One of the highlights of Palo Alto's bicycle system is the large number of attractive bicycle and pedestrian bridges, most of which span the City's creeks. Without these bridges, riders and walkers would have to take long detours, often on congested major streets.

Walking comprises the same share of trips as public transit, yet is an inexpensive and often overlooked means of transportation. Palo Alto's pedestrians are generally well served by current facilities and will benefit from the attention given to street trees and bikeways. There will be more benefits in the future, as the City emphasizes walkable neighborhoods and pedestrian-oriented design. The most needed improvements are to fill in the gaps in the sidewalk system, make intersection crossings "friendlier," and overcome the barriers to northeast-southwest travel.

See Policy L-22

POLICY T-14:

Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to and between local destinations, including public facilities, schools, parks, open space, employment districts, shopping centers, and multi-modal transit stations.

See Map T-5 for the locations of existing and potential bikeways

PROGRAM T-18:

Develop and periodically update a comprehensive bicycle plan.

PROGRAM T-19:

Develop, periodically update, and implement a, bicycle facilities improvement program and a pedestrian facilities improvement program that identify and prioritize critical pedestrian and bicycle links to parks, schools, retail centers, and civic facilities.

PROGRAM T-20:

Periodically produce a local area bicycle route map jointly with adjacent jurisdictions.

PROGRAM T-21:

Study projects to depress bikeways and pedestrian walkways under Alma Street and the Caltrain tracks and implement if feasible.

There are distances of up to 1-1/4 miles between the existing pedestrian/bicycle railroad crossings. One or more strategically-located new crossings under Alma Street and the Caltrain tracks would reduce detours for bicyclists and pedestrians and improve northeast-southwest circulation. New pedestrian/bicycle undercrossings are envisioned as a way to increase grade crossing safety and reduce delays for users, especially as train frequencies increase.

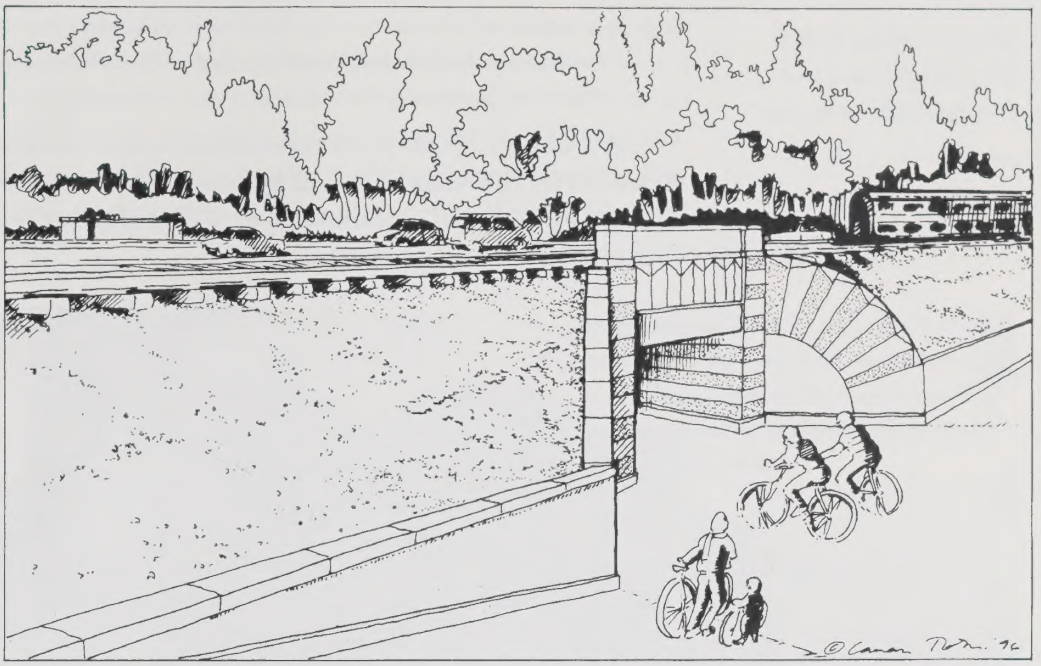


Illustration by Canan Tolon

The Caltrain tracks and adjacent Alma Street are significant barriers to northeast-southwest travel. Bicyclists and pedestrians must join thousands of vehicles to cross the tracks at the few available crossings. New bicycle/pedestrian undercrossings are needed to improve safety and convenience.

PROGRAM T-22:

Implement a network of bicycle boulevards, including extension of the southern end of the Bryant Street bicycle boulevard to Mountain View.

A bicycle boulevard is a low volume through-street where bicycles have priority over automobiles, conflicts between bicycles and automobiles are minimized, and bicycle travel time is reduced by removal of stop signs and other impediments to bicycle travel. The removal of stop signs is especially important in Palo Alto, due to the large number of stop signs on local and collector streets. The highly popular Bryant Street bicycle boulevard—the nation's first—should be extended to Mountain View. An northeast-southwest bicycle boulevard is a high priority.

Photo courtesy of City of Palo Alto Manager's office

The Bryant Street bicycle boulevard, enjoyed by hundreds of daily users, is the first in the nation. Many stop signs have been removed along this low-volume residential street to provide the equivalent of an arterial street for bicyclists. Shown here is the official opening of an extension of the boulevard in 1992.

See also Policies B-28, B-29, B-30, B-31and L-44 and associated programs

PROGRAM T-23:

Develop public sidewalks and bicycle facilities in Stanford Research Park and other employment areas.

Though there are sidewalks present in most parts of Palo Alto, a major gap exists in the Stanford Research Park. Sidewalks are desired by many employees for exercise, travel to work, errands, and access to bus stops. Bicycle lanes need to be added or widened on many Stanford Research Park roads and at some intersections.

When the Stanford Research Park was built in the 1950s, automobiles were seen as the only sensible way to travel and streets were designed without sidewalks. Today, many employees walk to work and exercise at lunch time, but they must do so in the traffic lanes.

See also Policy T-25

PROGRAM T-24:

Provide adequate outside through-lane widths for shared use by motorists and bicyclists when constructing or modifying roadways, where feasible.

Reducing traffic lane width is one of the easiest ways to gain space for additional lanes and increased roadway capacity. However, the needs of bicyclists who use the outside lanes must be considered before taking such actions.

POLICY T-15:

Encourage the acquisition of easements for bicycle and pedestrian paths through new private developments.

POLICY T-16:

Create connecting paths for pedestrians and bicycles where dead-end streets prevent through circulation in new developments and in existing neighborhoods.

POLICY T-17:

Increase cooperation with surrounding communities and other agencies to establish and maintain off-road bicycle and pedestrian paths and trails utilizing creek, utility, and railroad rights-of-way.

Off-road paths are best located away from the noise, emissions, and interfering traffic movements of roads and intersections. In built-up communities, the only available rights-of-way for paths outside of road corridors are usually associated with railroads, creeks, and utilities. Wherever possible, paths would be designed to connect with existing and planned trails in adjoining jurisdictions.

A key way to improve bicycle and pedestrian circulation is to overcome barriers and provide more linkages between destinations. Detouring around obstacles like freeways and railroads is more significant to bicyclists and pedestrians than it is to drivers. Small-scale links that avoid the need to detour around large buildings, parking lots, or dead-end streets are also important. As with streets, there should be a hierarchy of pedestrian and bicycle routes, ranging from busy through-ways to low-volume streets to off-road routes that are free of traffic noise and congestion.

A creekside levee can serve as a walking and bicycling path *(Adobe Creek/Highway 101 underpass, above)*.

In a built-up area like Palo Alto, creeks may be the only available corridors free of automobile traffic that can provide opportunities for bicycling and walking links between different parts of town *(Adobe Creek levee without path, below)*.

PROGRAM T-25:

Evaluate the design of a Bay-to-Foothills path.

A Bay-to-Foothills path is only a conceptual idea at this time. However, trails for hikers are in place from Arastradero Road to Skyline Boulevard through existing park lands. Creek corridors and Stanford lands offer the best opportunities for routing this path through the urban area of Palo Alto. Ideally, the path should be constructed as a multi-use trail that includes bicycles, pedestrians, and equestrians (possibly with parallel trail segments for different users).

See Map T-6 for the location of paths and pedestrian ways.

PROGRAM T-26:

Complete development of the Bay Trail and Ridge Trail in Palo Alto.

The Bay Trail, about 45 percent complete in 1997, will eventually encircle San Francisco Bay as close to the shoreline as possible. It is intended to provide a pleasant recreational and commuting route for non-motorized users. The much longer Ridge Trail, about 50 percent complete in1997, will eventually encircle the entire Bay Area following the ridgelines of the surrounding hills. It is intended to provide a more rugged recreational trail for non-motorized users. The portions of both trails within Palo Alto are nearly complete.

POLICY T-18:

Support the development of the Santa Clara County Countywide Bicycle System, and other regional bicycle plans.

POLICY T-19:

Improve and add attractive, secure bicycle parking at both public and private facilities, including multi-modal transit stations, on transit vehicles, in City parks, in private developments, and at other community destinations.

Palo Alto's bicycle parking requirements for new construction have been a model for other communities. As a result, bicycle parking—which is as important as having bicycle routes—can be found at most destinations. More bicycle parking is still needed in some areas, including parts of Downtown. Secure bicycle parking at multi-modal transit stations is needed for intermittent users. All transit operators now allow bicycles to be carried on buses and trains but capacity is limited. Palo Alto will continue to require high quality bicycle parking in private development projects and at public facilities and will continue to work with public transit operators to increase on-board capacity.

Photo courtesy of Caltrain Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board

Bicycling and public transit are a team, with each overcoming the shortcomings of the other. All local transit services now carry bicycles, with Caltrain the clear frontrunner at 24 bicycles per train. However, more capacity is needed, especially during commute hours.

PROGRAM T-27:

Work with Caltrain, Amtrak, and public bus operators to expand bicycle storage on public transit vehicles during both peak and off-peak hours.

POLICY T-20:

Improve maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

More than automobiles, bicycles are sensitive to poor pavement quality and roadway debris, which can increase bicycle travel time and the risk of accidents. Some bicycle lanes that are not adjacent to curbs do not receive adequate street sweeping, and off-road facilities are only minimally maintained. Thus, more attention and effort must be given to maintenance of roadway shoulders, bicycle lanes, and off-road paths. Sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities require periodic cleaning and maintenance, which need to be especially frequent in high pedestrian traffic areas such as the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue business districts.

PROGRAM T-28:

Adjust the street evaluation criteria of the City's Pavement Management Program to ensure that areas of the road used by bicyclists are maintained at the same standards as, or at standards higher than, areas used by motor vehicles.

PROGRAM T-29:

Provide regular maintenance of off-road bicycle and pedestrian paths, including sweeping, weed abatement, and pavement maintenance.

PROGRAM T-30:

Develop cooperative programs with the City and businesses to keep sidewalks clean in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue business districts, and other centers.

POLICY T-21:

Support the use of Downtown alleyways for pedestrian- and bicycle-only use.

See also Policies L-21 and B-20

PROGRAM T-31:

Test the Downtown Urban Design Guide emphasis on the use of alleyways for pedestrian- and bicycle-only use. Allow controlled vehicle access for loading and unloading where no alternatives exist.

POLICY T-22:

Improve amenities such as seating, lighting, bicycle parking, street trees, and interpretive stations along bicycle and pedestrian paths and in City parks to encourage walking and cycling and enhance the feeling of safety.

POLICY T-23:

Encourage pedestrian-friendly design features such as sidewalks, street trees, on-street parking, public spaces, gardens, outdoor furniture, art, and interesting architectural details.

PROGRAM T-32:

Improve pedestrian crossings with bulbouts, small curb radii, street trees near corners, bollards, and landscaping to create protected areas.

The pedestrian environment can be enhanced by features that offer visual interest and relief from large building facades and wide expanses of asphalt. Street trees buffer walkers from traffic and intersection bulbouts shorten pedestrian crossings.

See also Policy L-69 and Program L-71 for designated scenic roadways

GOAL T-4: An Efficient Roadway Network for All Users

All modes of transportation in Palo Alto depend to some degree on the roadway network. The City's roadway network has remained essentially unchanged since the 1960s, yet overall traffic volumes have been increasing. Many intersections are congested during the peak morning and afternoon travel periods. Despite annual fluctuations and the overall increase in traffic, peak period volumes at many of the key intersections in Palo Alto's employment areas have not changed substantially since 1985. In some locations, traffic has even decreased.

See Map T-7 showing existing and projected traffic volumes

Intersections are the most constricted points on the network. Some intersection improvements have been made over the years and a few others are planned. Outside of major new roadway projects proposed in the Sand Hill Road area by Stanford University, no major expansions of the road network are planned. Existing and projected traffic volumes on Palo Alto's road network are illustrated on Map T-7 at the end of this Element.

See Map T-8 showing the circulation system, including street and roadway designations. See also the Land Use and Circulation Map.

POLICY T-24:

Maintain a hierarchy of streets that includes freeways, expressways, arterials, residential arterials, collectors, and local streets.

Palo Alto's streets fall into various categories, depending on their purpose and design and the amount of traffic they carry. This street hierarchy is defined below and is illustrated on the Land Use and Circulation Map.

POLICY T-25:

When constructing or modifying roadways, plan for usage of the roadway space by all users, including motor vehicles, transit vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

Palo Alto's Roadway Hierarchy

Freeway: Major roadway with controlled access; devoted exclusively to traffic movement, mainly of a through or regional nature.

Expressway: Major roadway with limited access to adjacent properties; devoted almost exclusively to traffic movement, mainly serving through-traffic.

Arterial: Major roadway mainly serving through-traffic; takes traffic to and from expressways and freeways; provides access to adjacent properties.

Residential Arterial: Major roadway mainly serving through-traffic; takes traffic to and from expressways and freeways; provides access to adjacent properties, most of which are residential properties located on both sides of the roadway with direct frontages and driveways on that roadway.

Collector: Roadway that collects and distributes local traffic to and from arterial streets, and provides access to adjacent properties.

Local: Minor roadway that provides access to adjacent properties only.

Palo Alto has always strived to accommodate all modes of travel in its street system. Still, more emphasis is needed on non-auto modes in the design and modification of roadways, especially major streets and intersections. For example, additional lanes at intersections should not be installed at the expense of bicycle lanes, sidewalks, or landscaping. The pedestrian and bicyclist environment must be considered when designing road surfaces, curbs, crossings, signage, landscaping, and sight lines

PROGRAM T-33:

Develop comprehensive roadway design standards and criteria for all types of roads. Emphasize bicycle and pedestrian safety and usability in these standards.

See also Program L-79 for design standards

PROGRAM T-34:

Establish procedures for considering the effects of street modifications on emergency vehicle response time.

POLICY T-26:

Participate in the design and implementation of comprehensive solutions to traffic problems near Stanford Shopping Center and Stanford Medical Center.

See also Policies B-22, B-32, L-26, L-45 and T-48 on expansion of the Stanford Shopping Center and Medical Center

PROGRAM T-35:

Consider increased public transit, a shuttle, and other traffic and parking solutions to ensure safe, convenient access to the Stanford Shopping Center/ Medical Center area.

The Stanford Shopping Center and Medical Center area is a large, concentrated generator of automobile trips, not easily reached by freeways. Significant roadway and transit improvements are needed in this area to reduce automobile congestion.

PROGRAM T-36:

Extend Sand Hill Road to El Camino Real and construct related improvements consistent with neighborhood and community interests. Do not extend Sand Hill Road to Alma Street.

PROGRAM T-37:

Provide safe, convenient pedestrian, bicycle, and shuttle connections between the Stanford Shopping Center and Medical Center areas and future housing along the Sand Hill Road corridor, the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station, Downtown Palo Alto, and other primary destinations.

POLICY T-27:

Avoid major increases in street capacity unless necessary to remedy severe traffic congestion or critical neighborhood traffic problems. Where capacity is increased, balance the needs of motor vehicles with those of pedestrians and bicyclists.

See Map T-9 for locations of key intersections to be monitored

See also Program L-7 on commercial growth monitoring

POLICY T-28:

Make effective use of the traffic-carrying ability of Palo Alto's major street network without compromising the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists also using this network.

Palo Alto desires to keep traffic flowing as freely as possible on major streets to minimize the diversion of through-traffic onto local residential streets. A challenge is to balance the free flow of traffic with residents' desire to maintain low traffic speeds, especially on residential arterials. Most future roadway improvements will be made within existing rights-of-way at intersections and will provide relatively small increases in roadway capacity. The primary exception is the Sand Hill Road area, where Stanford University plans to implement an expansion and extension of Sand Hill Road and construct other new roadways to handle existing and projected traffic. Elsewhere in the City, intersection improvements are planned only at the major intersections noted below.

Locations of Proposed Intersection Improvements

Additional turning lanes and other related changes are proposed at the following major intersections in Palo Alto:

- **El Camino Real/ Page Mill Road**
- **Middlefield Road/ Oregon Expressway**
- **El Camino Real/ Embarcadero Road**
- **Foothill Expressway/ Junipero Serra Boulevard/ Page Mill Road**
- **Hanover Street/ Page Mill Road**
- **Arastradero Road/ Foothill Expressway**

Palo Alto's policy is to make necessary roadway improvements while providing for bicyclists and pedestrians and ensuring the safety of all roadway and sidewalk users. All new roads in the Sand Hill Road area will include bicycle lanes and sidewalks. All of the City's intersection improvements will be designed to handle additional traffic while comfortably accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians to the greatest degree possible. Twenty intersections will be monitored annually as an indicator of the effectiveness of the City's growth management policies.

PROGRAM T-38:

Implement computerized traffic management systems to improve traffic flow when feasible.

PROGRAM T-39:

Maintain the current program of not adding traffic signals on Alma Street north of Lytton Avenue and south of Channing Avenue to Churchill Avenue; and on Middlefield Road north of Lytton Avenue and south of Channing Avenue to Embarcadero Road.

POLICY T-29:

Regulate truck movements in a manner that balances the efficient movement of goods with the residential character of Palo Alto's arterial street system.

An important function of the roadway system is the movement of goods via trucks. Because of the large size and weight of many trucks, the streets on which they are allowed must be physically designed for their repeated passage. Truck noise and vibration especially affect residential properties. Since most Palo Alto streets are lined with residential properties, it is critical to balance the commercial needs of the community with the needs of local residents.

PROGRAM T-40:

Evaluate the feasibility of changes to Palo Alto's through truck routes and weight limits to consider such issues as relationship to neighboring jurisdictions, lower weight limits, increased number of routes, and economic and environmental impacts.

GOAL T-5: A Transportation System with Minimal Impacts on Residential Neighborhoods.

Most Palo Alto streets are bordered by residential land uses. Citizens' concerns reflect chronic problems like speeding, commuter shortcutting, and too much traffic. Police enforcement cannot be provided consistently enough to permanently reduce speeds and cannot reduce the amount of traffic in any case. Traffic calming refers to projects that make permanent, physical changes to streets to slow traffic and/or reduce volumes, thus improving their safety and addressing residents' concerns. The challenge is to calm traffic on neighborhood streets in ways that are economically feasible and that still allow for reasonably efficient traffic flow.

POLICY T-30:

Reduce the impacts of through-traffic on residential areas by designating certain streets as residential arterials.

The City has designated some streets as residential arterials to recognize that they carry large volumes of through-traffic but also have residential uses on both sides of the street. The City's objective is to address the desires of residents of these streets who would like to have slower speeds, safer conditions for bicycles and pedestrians, and aesthetic improvements. This must be done economically and without appreciably reducing traffic capacity or diverting traffic onto local neighborhood streets. Examples of improvements are "boulevard" treatments (landscaped medians and planting strips), gateway features, and traffic signal changes.

Several of Palo Alto's major streets are designated as "Residential Arterials." These roads were originally designed to handle primarily auto traffic, but today's residents prefer that they be redesigned with new landscaped medians and other features to reduce speeds.

Illustration by Canan Tolon

PROGRAM T-41:

The following roadways are designated as residential arterials. Treat these streets with landscaping, medians, and other visual improvements to distinguish them as residential streets, in order to reduce traffic speeds.

- *Middlefield Road (between San Francisquito Creek and San Antonio Road)*
- *University Avenue (between San Francisquito Creek and Middlefield Road)*
- *Embarcadero Road (between Alma Street and West Bayshore Road)*
- *Charleston/Arastradero Roads (between Miranda Avenue and Fabian Way)*

PROGRAM T-42:

Use landscaping and other improvements to establish clear "gateways" at the points where University Avenue and Embarcadero Road transition from freeways to neighborhoods.

See also Program L-18 on priority street improvements

POLICY T-31:

Evaluate smoothing and slowing traffic flow in commercial areas by reducing through-traffic lanes and trading the area for improved turning lanes, landscaping, and bicycle lanes.

In commercial areas, it may be feasible to reduce the number of lanes for through-traffic without losing too much traffic handling capacity. In these areas, curb lanes are often not very useful for through-traffic since they may be blocked or slowed by cars turning into and out of driveways and parking spaces.

POLICY T-32:

Design and maintain the City street network to provide a variety of alternate routes, so that the traffic loads on any one street are minimized.

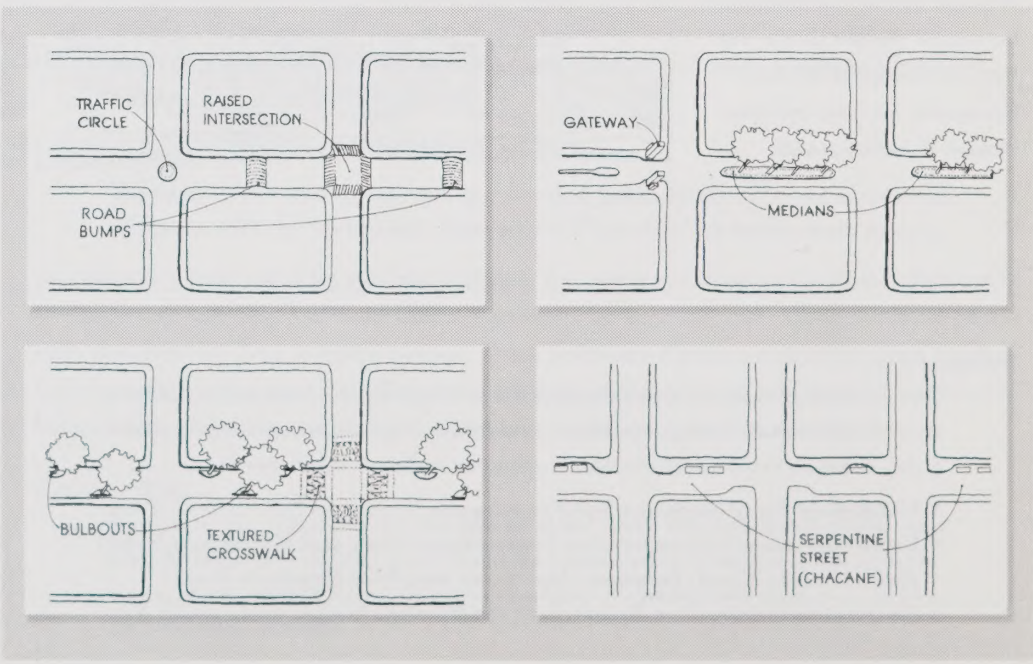
POLICY T-33:

Keep all neighborhood streets open unless there is a demonstrated safety or overwhelming through-traffic problem and there are no acceptable alternatives, or unless a closure would increase the use of alternative transportation modes.

Street closures are controversial, disrupt the traditional neighborhood street grid, and may shift traffic to adjacent streets. However, closures are effective at eliminating through-traffic, especially when safety issues are involved. They may be a necessary design element for a bicycle boulevard or transit mall.

POLICY T-34:

Implement traffic calming measures to slow traffic on local and collector residential streets and prioritize these measures over congestion management. Include traffic circles and other traffic calming devices among these measures.



Most neighborhood streets were not designed for speed, nor to carry through-traffic. The traffic calming features illustrated here can be used selectively to dramatically reduce speeds and encourage some drivers to return to arterial streets.

Traffic calming measures can reduce speeds and return some through-traffic from local and collector streets to nearby arterials. Traffic calming also includes education and enforcement measures that promote changes in driver behavior. Where warranted by traffic conditions and residents' desires, Palo Alto's policy is to implement physical changes to local and collector streets that slow traffic close to the 25 mph residential speed limit. Creative approaches will be explored to achieve this policy. Physical changes will be safe and will take into account the needs of all road users.

PROGRAM T-43:

Establish a Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program to implement appropriate traffic calming measures. Consider using development fees as a funding source for this program.

A Traffic Calming Program is proposed to ensure a consistent approach in all neighborhoods and to provide a steady source of dedicated funds. Existing traffic impact fees are currently earmarked only for major street improvements. This policy could be modified to allow these fees to be used for neighborhood traffic calming projects where the traffic problems will be a direct result of a specific development proposal.

PROGRAM T-44:

Evaluate changing Homer and Channing Avenues to two-way streets with or without redevelopment of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation campus.

POLICY T-35:

Reduce neighborhood street and intersection widths and widen planting strips as appropriate.

See also Policy L-17 on residential streets

POLICY T-36:

Make new and replacement curbs vertical where desired by neighborhood residents.

Vertical curbs prevent drivers from parking on sidewalks, a common and undesirable practice in areas where rolled curbs are not separated from sidewalks by planting strips. When conversion from rolled to vertical curbs is undertaken, the minimum area should be, in general, a street block and not individual properties.

Illustration by Conan Tolon

Many residential streets, especially those built after World War II, are so wide and obstacle-free that they encourage speeding. These streets can be narrowed by adding trees in the parking lane, increasing shade and visual interest in addition to slowing traffic.

See also Goal N-3 and associated policies and programs on the urban forest

POLICY T-37:

Where sidewalks are directly adjacent to curbs and no planting strip exists, explore ways to add planting pockets with street trees to increase shade and reduce the apparent width of wide streets.

In many of the areas of Palo Alto built since World War II, an integral curb and sidewalk design was used, resulting in sidewalks immediately next to traffic lanes. Adding planting pockets and street trees would promote pedestrian use and also provide visual cues to drivers to reduce speeds.

POLICY T-38:

Continue the current "guard and go" system of having stop signs approximately every other block on local residential streets to discourage through-traffic.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

GOAL T-6: A High Level of Safety for Motorists, Pedestrians, and Bicyclists on Palo Alto Streets

Traffic safety will continue to be among the City's top priorities in the future. Traffic accidents have decreased from about 1,600 accidents of all types in 1985 to about 900 in 1995. The rate of injury accidents in Palo Alto (about 550 per year) consistently remained below the statewide average between 1989 and 1993. Speeds on arterial streets have remained relatively constant since the mid-1970s. Nonetheless, higher traffic volumes and more aggressive, less civil driver behavior have heightened citizens' concerns about public safety. Many residents feel that driving, walking, and bicycling conditions are not as safe as they used to be. The City takes these concerns seriously.

Bicyclists and pedestrians are accomodated by traffic signals that can be prompted to activate upon their arrival at major intersections

POLICY T-39:

To the extent allowed by law, continue to make safety the first priority of citywide transportation planning. Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile safety over vehicle level-of-service at intersections.

PROGRAM T-45:

Provide adult crossing guards at school crossings that meet adopted criteria.

PROGRAM T-46:

Encourage extensive educational programs for safe use of bicycles, mopeds, and motorcycles, including the City-sponsored bicycle education programs in the public schools and the bicycle traffic school program for juveniles.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Most schools were designed when the majority of children walked, bicycled, or rode school buses. Today, parents dropping off and picking up children in cars overwhelm available facilities and overflow into adjacent streets, creating safety concerns.

PROGRAM T-47:

Utilize engineering, enforcement, and educational tools to improve traffic safety on City roadways.

POLICY T-40:

Continue to prioritize the safety and comfort of school children in street modification projects that affect school travel routes.

The safety of children traveling to and from school has always been a high priority. Because more parents now regularly drive their children to school, safety concerns from school traffic congestion have increased.

POLICY T-41:

Vigorously and consistently enforce speed limits and other traffic laws.

SPECIAL NEEDS

GOAL T-7: Mobility For People With Special Needs

Many people cannot or do not wish to drive and some are not able to use all transportation modes. Young people, seniors, people with low incomes, and people with disabilities all have special transportation needs. Palo Alto is committed to providing reasonable mobility for these populations and for others who do not or cannot drive. In the past, the City has made provisions for curb cuts, parking spaces, and audible traffic signals for people with disabilities. Palo Alto is committed to supporting full access to transportation for all people in the future. Implementation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will ensure that all transportation facilities are usable by people with disabilities, precluding the need for separate, special services and equipment.

Goals T-2 and T-3 also address mobility for persons without access to automobiles

POLICY T-42:

Address the needs of people with disabilities and comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) during the planning and implementation of transportation and parking improvement projects.

POLICY T-43:

Provide and/or promote demand-responsive paratransit service.

PROGRAM T-48:

Monitor Santa Clara County's paratransit program to assess its adequacy.

POLICY T-44:

Support transit agencies in implementing or continuing reduced fare or no fare voucher systems for selected populations.

PARKING

GOAL T-8: Attractive, Convenient Public and Private Parking Facilities

Parking is allowed on most streets in Palo Alto, and large tracts of land in commercial areas are devoted to parking. The City regulates parking in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue business districts. Public lots in these areas are paid for by property owners through annual assessments levied by the City. Most public and private parking is provided "free" to drivers, although most business owner costs are ultimately passed on to consumers in the pricing of goods and services. Based on a 1996 feasibility study completed for new parking structures in Downtown Palo Alto, the cost of a net new parking space is approximately $26,500, including design, construction and financing, plus an on-going annual cost of approximately $220 per space for maintenance and enforcement.

In Palo Alto's business districts, public short-term customer parking is free. Employees must purchase permits for all-day parking, but some businesses underwrite the cost of the permits. Stanford University is the only major employer in the area that requires employees to pay for parking. Stanford's Marguerite shuttle bus service and other transportation services are funded by these parking fees.

Parking issues in Palo Alto are primarily focused on the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue business districts. In 1995, there was a shortage of approximately 1,500 parking spaces in Downtown Palo Alto. If one or two new parking structures were to be built in the foreseeable future, about 600 to 800 new spaces would be created. However, the costs to local business owners would be substantial and the number of spaces provided would still not be enough to eliminate employee parking on nearby residential streets.

On-street parking in residential areas is generally plentiful and free to residents. The exception is in residential areas near business districts, where on-street spaces are often used by employees and customers. The challenge for the future will be to manage the existing parking supply while reducing parking demand by providing alternatives to driving. Ultimately, parking demand may only be managed effectively when users pay directly for its costs. Some of the proceeds could be used to finance and improve transportation modes that do not have the space requirements or environmental impacts of automobiles.

The 13-Point Parking Program

The University Avenue/Downtown Palo Alto 13-point program is an example of a comprehensive strategy that includes a broad range of parking supply and demand management strategies that have been approved by the City Council and are in various stages of implementation:

1. Implement two-hour color zone parking with two 30-minute zones per block face that are exempt from the color zone regulations.
2. Do not include the South of Forest Area (SOFA), or Forest Avenue in the color zones. However, pursue additional parking opportunities in this area.

3a. Where feasible, restripe all surface lots in order to gain additional parking spaces.

3b. Reserve close-in surface lots for shoppers, and establish increased permit spaces for employees in Lots Q, T, Webster/Cowper, Civic Center, and any other perimeter lots.

4. Consider valet and/or paid parking on one or more appropriate Downtown lots.
5. Initiate short-term leases of vacant or underused private parking lots, such as the Caltrain lots.
6. Allow a moratorium or relaxation of parking lot design regulations for interim lots. Any lots that would eventually become permanent would be designed to meet Architectural Review Board guidelines.

7a. Remove City employee preference for access to parking facility waiting lists.

7b. Initiate dialogue about allocation of Civic Center parking spaces between City Hall and Downtown businesses.

8. Implement a new graphics program to provide signs, maps, and other graphics about Downtown parking facilities for shoppers, employers and employees, to be paid for out of Downtown assessment district funds created under the Parking Lot J Planned Community Ordinance.
9. Create an educational flyer about where parking is, how much is available, and how much it costs each time an employee moves his or her car.
10. Pursue a new parking structure for Lots S and L and any other feasible sites (including consideration of removing the former Palo Alto Board of Realtors structure in order to facilitate construction on Lots S and L).
11. Encourage the following alternative transportation measures: (a) expand responsibilities of the City of Palo Alto commute coordinator position; (b) monitor the carpool pass program for abuses; (c) explore SamTrans express bus routes to Downtown.
12. Make present permit parking in Holiday Inn lot free parking. In the event it is fully subscribed, the district will look for alternative free parking outside of the core.
13. Implement security measures including increased police patrols, security guards for underground and multi-level structures, and painting of existing structures "white and bright".

POLICY T-45:

Provide sufficient parking in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue business districts to address long-range needs.

Palo Alto's policy in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue areas is for most new development to provide its own parking, as the existing demand exceeds the existing supply. Under certain circumstances, in-lieu fees may be paid instead of providing parking spaces. The fees are used to provide future public parking spaces.

See also Policies B-20 and L-23, Program L-8 for the Downtown, Policy L-28 for California Avenue, and Programs L-76, L-77 and L-78 for parking lots

PROGRAM T-49:

Implement a comprehensive program of parking supply and demand management strategies for Downtown Palo Alto.

PROGRAM T-50:

Continue working with merchants, the Chamber of Commerce, neighbors, and a parking consultant to explore options for constructing new parking facilities or using existing parking more efficiently.

PROGRAM T-51:

Work with merchants to designate dedicated employee parking areas.

The Cambridge Avenue public parking structure is Palo Alto's newest. Such structures are expensive to construct and are generally avoided by drivers unless there are no surface spaces. However, they are the only way to provide parking where open land is scarce and where closely spaced buildings are desired to maintain a pedestrian environment.

POLICY T-46:

Minimize the need for all-day employee parking facilities in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue business districts and encourage short-term customer parking.

POLICY T-47:

Protect residential areas from the parking impacts of nearby business districts.

PROGRAM T-52:

Evaluate options to ensure maximum use of the City parking structures in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue areas.

See also Policies L-45 and B-32

PROGRAM T-53:

Discourage parking facilities that would intrude into adjacent residential neighborhoods.

POLICY T-48:

Encourage parking strategies in the Stanford Medical Center area that maximize the efficient use of parking and, in the long term, consider the possible use of remote parking lots with shuttle bus service.

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

See also Goal G-3 and associated policies

GOAL T-9: An Influential Role in Shaping and Implementing Regional Transportation Decisions

Increasing population and traffic congestion over the past 20 years have required an increased emphasis on regional solutions to transportation issues. A regional approach for some transportation issues is needed to avoid local solutions that simply shift the problem elsewhere or produce unintended results. For instance, a higher gas tax or parking fee in Santa Clara County or Palo Alto might shift business to other cities. Moreover, transportation facilities like Caltrain or the Bayshore Freeway need to be managed on a regional basis.

Palo Alto has been an active participant in the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Congestion Management Program (CMP). The CMPs in the various Bay Area counties are focal points for transportation planning and funding. Palo Alto representatives also participate and provide leadership in numerous Bay Area regional bodies affecting transportation, including the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD), as well as the various public transportation providers in Palo Alto, including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

POLICY T-49:

Lead and participate in initiatives to manage regional traffic.

POLICY T-50:

Collaborate with public interest groups and local, state, and federal governments to study and advocate transportation regulatory changes, such as an increase in the gasoline tax and market pricing efforts.

PROGRAM T-54:

Work regionally, and in particular with adjacent communities, to establish a system of parking fees that discourages single occupant vehicle use and encourages other transportation modes.

"Market pricing" is an approach to transportation management that recognizes that there are variations in travel demand. It is a concept that is applied in many aspects of the business world. For example, the cost of a long distance call is higher during the day when demand is high and the cost of an airline ticket is generally higher during peak times than in off-peak periods. In the transportation arena, market pricing can be applied in the form of toll roads, variable tolls, pay parking, higher gas taxes, insurance charged on a mileage basis, and others. Ideally, the consumer should pay all costs associated with a particular transportation mode, in proportion to usage. Consumers would still have freedom of choice, but the real costs and the consequences of their choices would be made clear. To avoid creating local inequities, market pricing is best accomplished on a regional level.

POLICY T-51:

Support the efforts of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) to coordinate transportation planning and services for the Mid-Peninsula and the Bay Area that emphasize alternatives to the automobile. Encourage MTC to base its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) on compact land use development assumptions.

POLICY T-52:

Where appropriate, support the conversion of existing traffic lanes to exclusive bus and high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes on freeways and expressways, including the Dumbarton Bridge.

POLICY T-53:

Participate in seeking a regional solution to improved roadway connections between Highway 101 and the Dumbarton Bridge without construction of a southern connection across environmentally sensitive baylands.

The "southern connection" refers to a potential new road link extending from the west end of the Dumbarton Bridge to Highway 101 in the vicinity of the Embarcadero Road/Oregon Expressway interchange. The route would be near the edge of the Bay and East Palo Alto

neighborhoods, passing through baylands preserves in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and Palo Alto. Because of potential impacts to the baylands, Palo Alto believes that the southern connection should not be constructed in that area.

POLICY T-54:

Support efforts by Caltrans and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Congestion Management Program to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow on area freeways.

PROGRAM T-55:

Support provision of a new southbound entrance ramp to Highway 101 from San Antonio Road, in conjunction with the closure of the southbound Charleston Road on-ramp at the Rengstorff Avenue interchange in Mountain View.

POLICY T-55:

Support the application of emerging freeway information, monitoring, and control systems that provide driver assistance and reduce congestion.

Today's technology can provide real-time transportation information, such as the precise positions of buses in service and the sites of traffic accidents. Many other applications are being implemented, such as ramp metering, changeable traffic warning signs, video surveillance, and immediate driver assistance. Most of these applications are focused on highway travel. These measures allow for better use of existing capacity and allow users to be better informed about upcoming trips.

See also Goal N-5 and associated air quality policies and programs

POLICY T-56:

Support state and federal legislation to reduce motor vehicle emissions, noise, and fuel consumption.

PROGRAM T-56:

Implement as appropriate the "local action list" of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and work with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's Congestion Management Program (CMP) and other jurisdictions to implement those actions that require a multi-jurisdictional effort.

See appendix for the BAAQMD's "local action list"

The BAAQMD local action list consists of many measures to reduce automobile trips and traffic congestion. Improved air quality is the driving force behind these and many other current traffic management actions. Cleaner fuels—and ultimately electric vehicles—may offer the greatest hope for improving air quality.

AIRPORT

GOAL T-10: A Local Airport with Minimal Off-site Impacts

The Palo Alto Airport is a County-operated facility located at the end of Embarcadero Road near San Francisco Bay. It is a general aviation facility with a strategic location close to major regional employment centers. The Airport provides a much-needed business and recreational facility for northern Santa Clara County, handling 250,000 landings and take-offs a year. Due to the short length of the runway and Federal Aviation Administration-imposed noise restrictions, use of the Airport is limited to single-engine and light twin-engine aircraft.

Airport policies were first adopted in the Baylands Master Plan of 1978, and are continued in this plan.

photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

POLICY T-57:

Support the continued vitality and effectiveness of the Palo Alto Airport without significantly increasing its intensity or intruding into open space areas. The Airport should remain limited to a single runway and two fixed base operators.

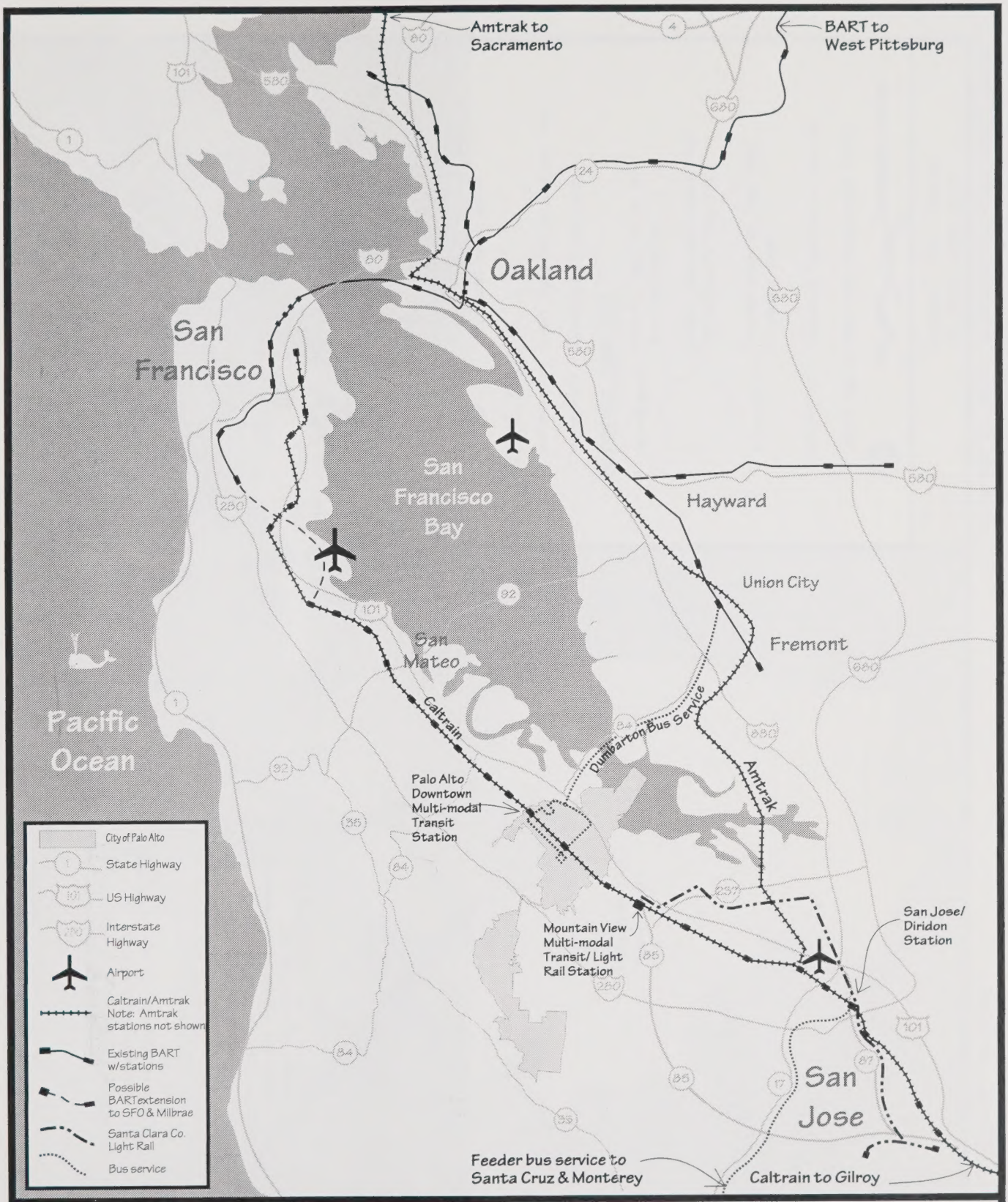
Palo Alto will allow for improvement and only minor expansion of existing Airport facilities. In the sensitive baylands area, and immediately adjacent to homes in East Palo Alto, traffic and aircraft noise should be minimized.

PROGRAM T-57:

Provide a planting strip and bicycle/pedestrian path adjacent to Embarcadero Road that is consistent with the open space character of the baylands.

PROGRAM T-58:

Encourage Santa Clara County to relocate the terminal building away from the Runway 31 clear zone, allowing for construction of a new terminal.



Scale is approximate

0 2.5 miles 5 miles 10 miles

The City of

Palo Alto COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 2010

Map T-1

Selected Regional Transit Services

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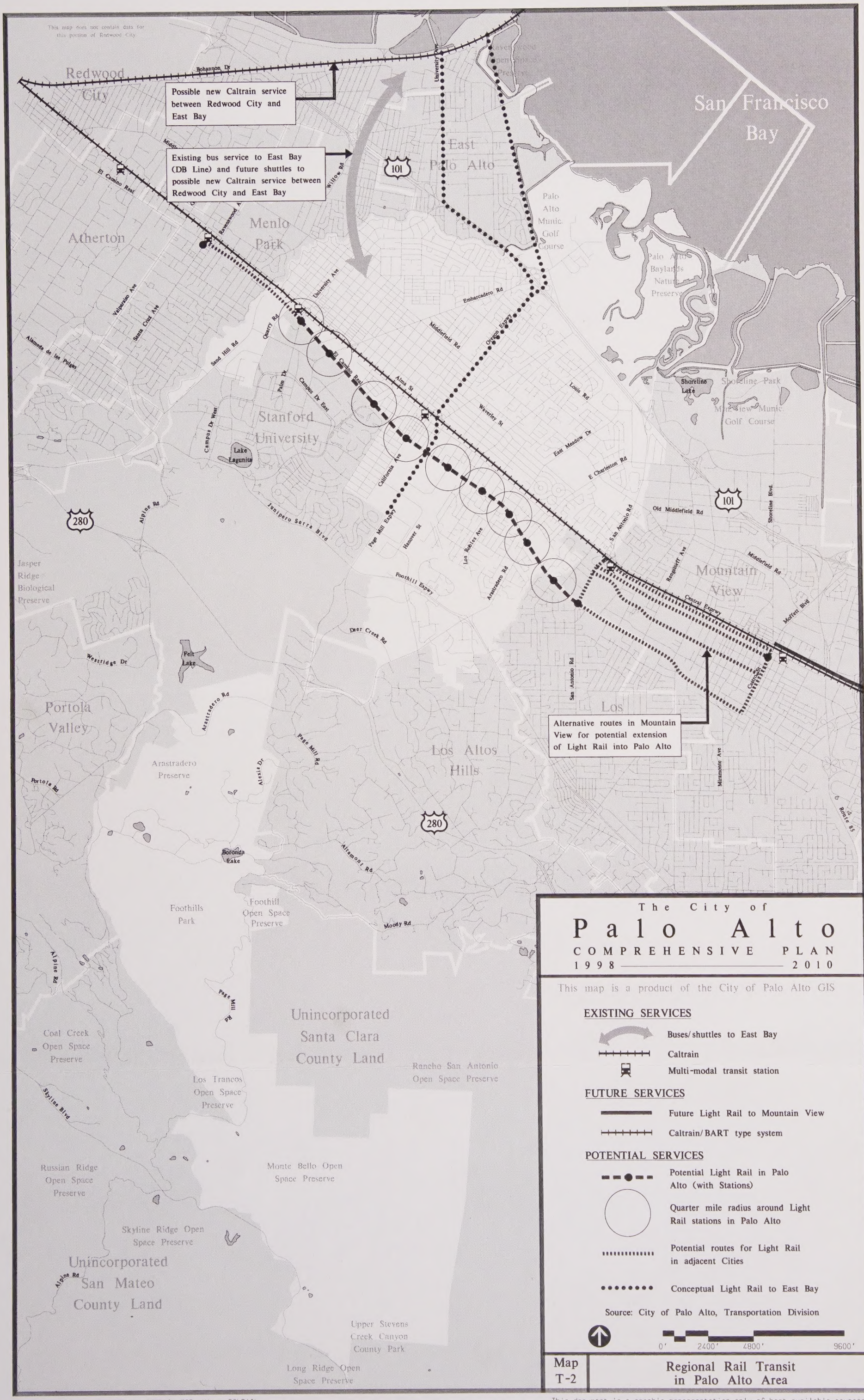

The City of

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

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EXISTING SERVICES

- Buses/shuttles to East Bay
- Caltrain
- Multi-modal transit station

FUTURE SERVICES

- Future Light Rail to Mountain View
- Caltrain/BART type system

POTENTIAL SERVICES

- Potential Light Rail in Palo Alto (with Stations)
- Quarter mile radius around Light Rail stations in Palo Alto
- Potential routes for Light Rail in adjacent Cities
- Conceptual Light Rail to East Bay

Source: City of Palo Alto, Transportation Division

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map T-2	Regional Rail Transit in Palo Alto Area

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Date: 02FEB98-11.18.10 By: DASCOMBE

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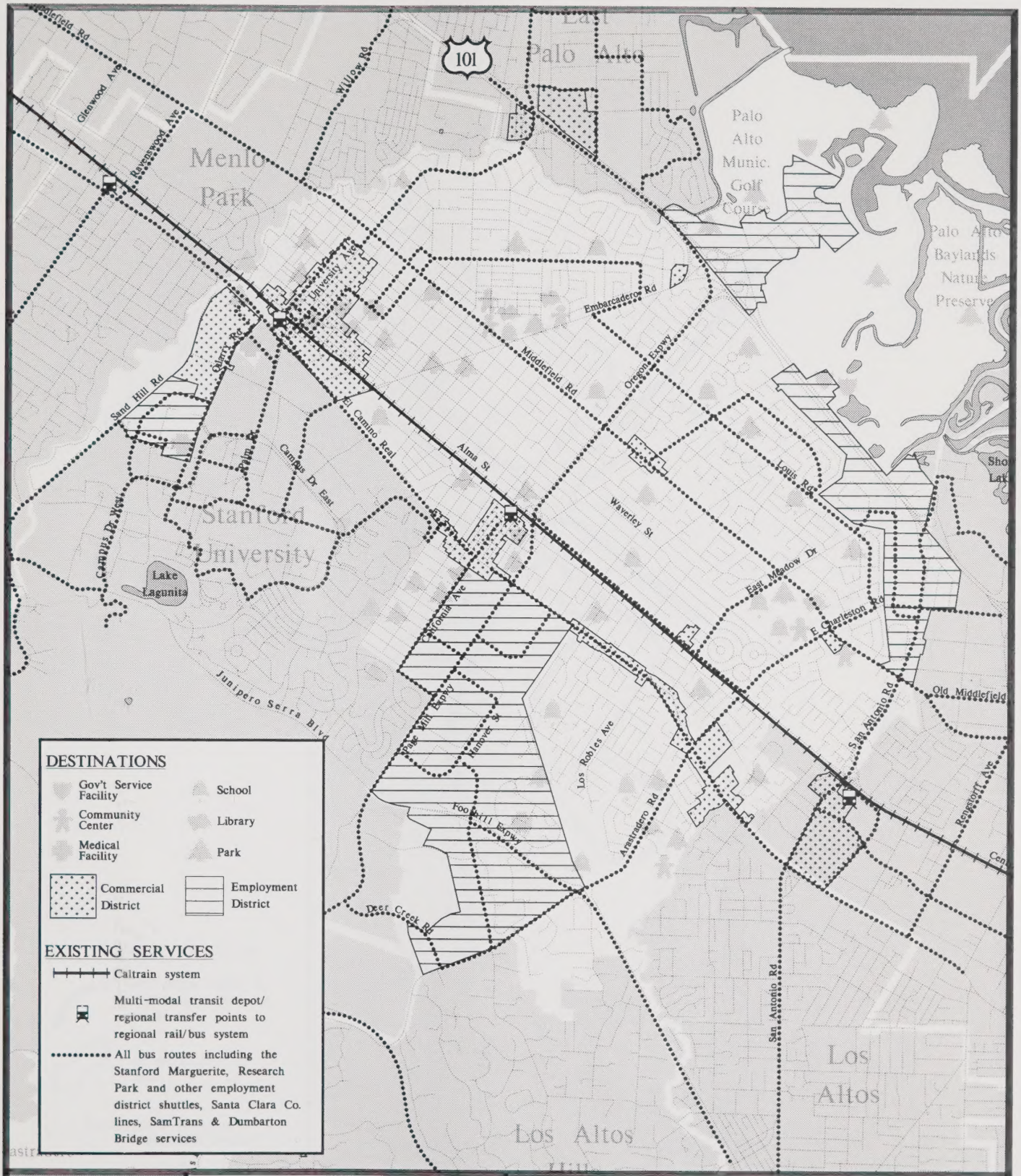

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Map T-3

Local Transit Services - Existing Services (1996)

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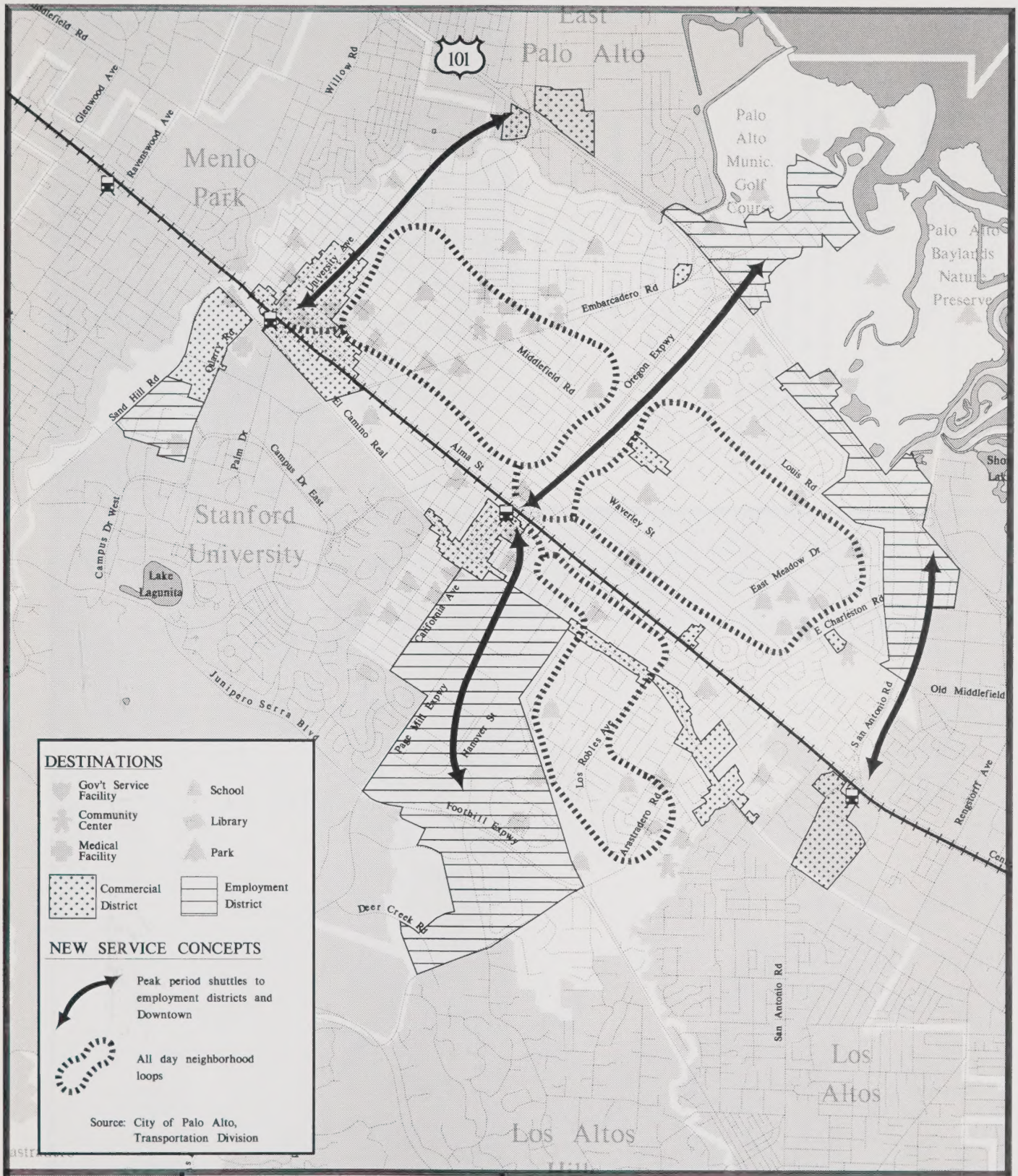

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Map T-4

Local Transit Services - New Service Concepts

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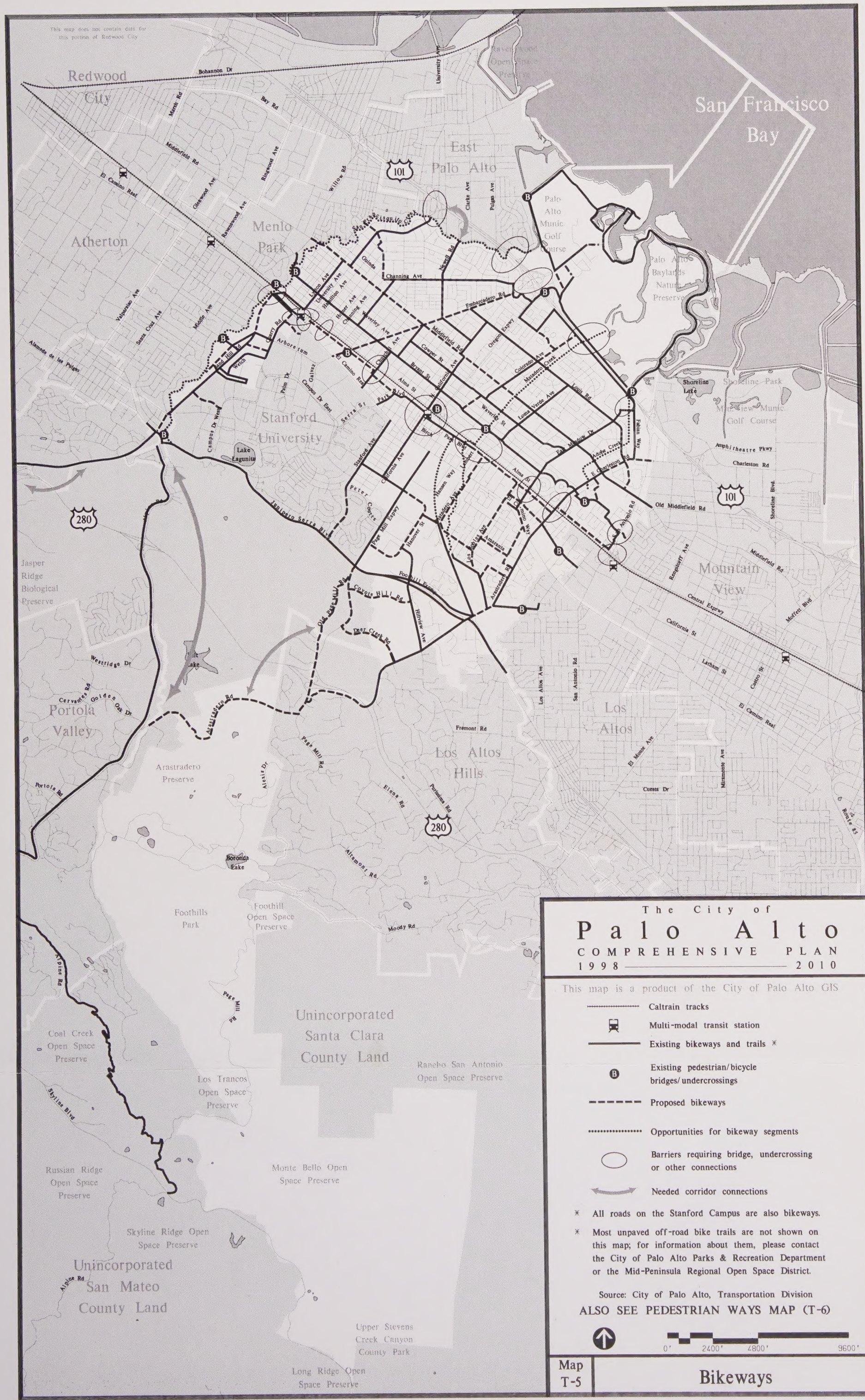

The City of Palo Alto COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

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- Caltrain tracks
- Multi-modal transit station
- Existing bikeways and trails *
- Existing pedestrian/bicycle bridges/ undercrossings
- Proposed bikeways
- Opportunities for bikeway segments
- Barriers requiring bridge, undercrossing or other connections
- Needed corridor connections

* All roads on the Stanford Campus are also bikeways.

* Most unpaved off-road bike trails are not shown on this map; for information about them, please contact the City of Palo Alto Parks & Recreation Department or the Mid-Peninsula Regional Open Space District.

Source: City of Palo Alto, Transportation Division

ALSO SEE PEDESTRIAN WAYS MAP (T-6)

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map T-5

Bikeways

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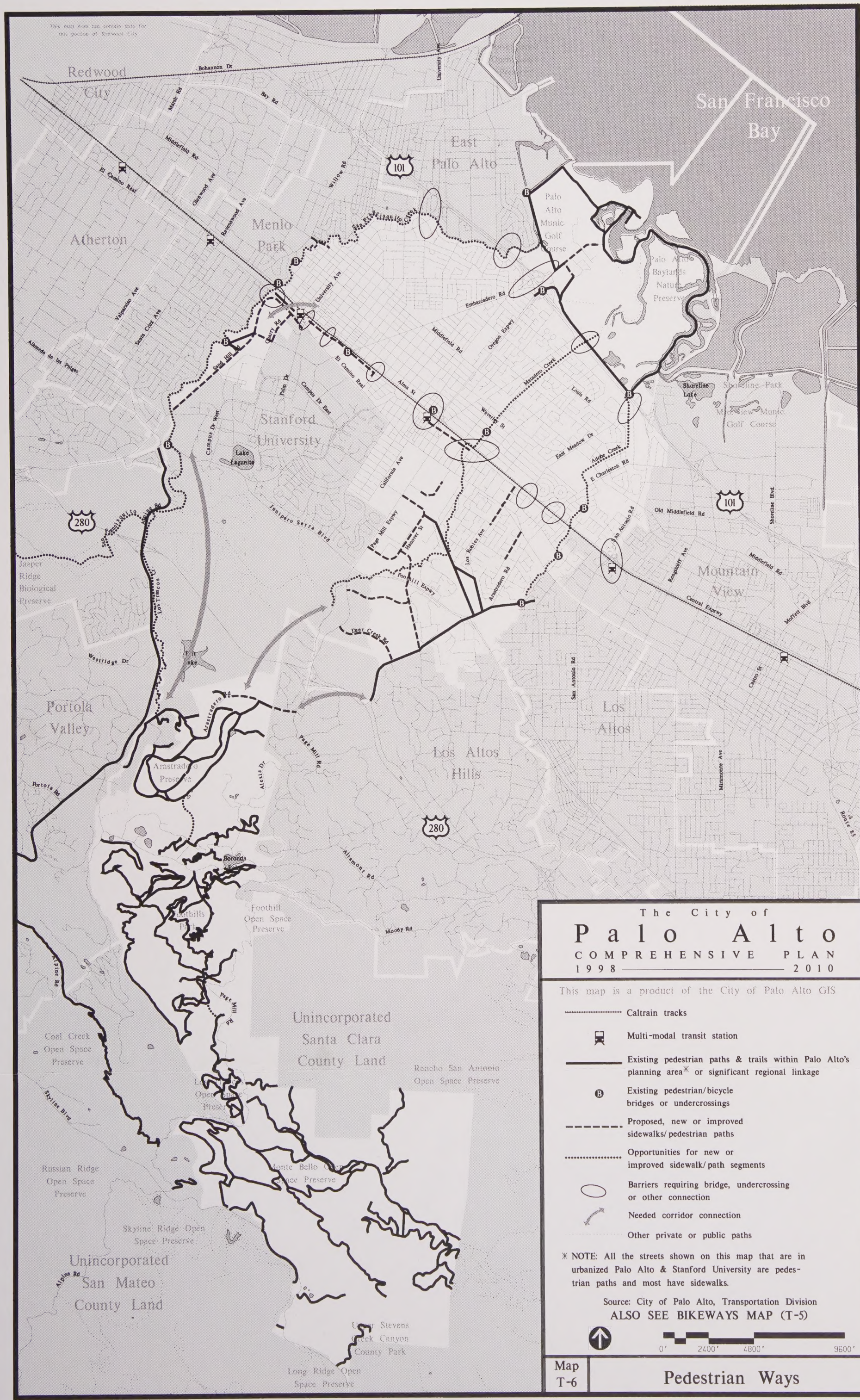

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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- Caltrain tracks
- Multi-modal transit station
- Existing pedestrian paths & trails within Palo Alto's planning area* or significant regional linkage
- Existing pedestrian/bicycle bridges or undercrossings
- Proposed, new or improved sidewalks/ pedestrian paths
- Opportunities for new or improved sidewalk/path segments
- Barriers requiring bridge, undercrossing or other connection
- Needed corridor connection
- Other private or public paths

* NOTE: All the streets shown on this map that are in urbanized Palo Alto & Stanford University are pedestrian paths and most have sidewalks.

Source: City of Palo Alto, Transportation Division

ALSO SEE BIKEWAYS MAP (T-5)

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map T-6

Pedestrian Ways

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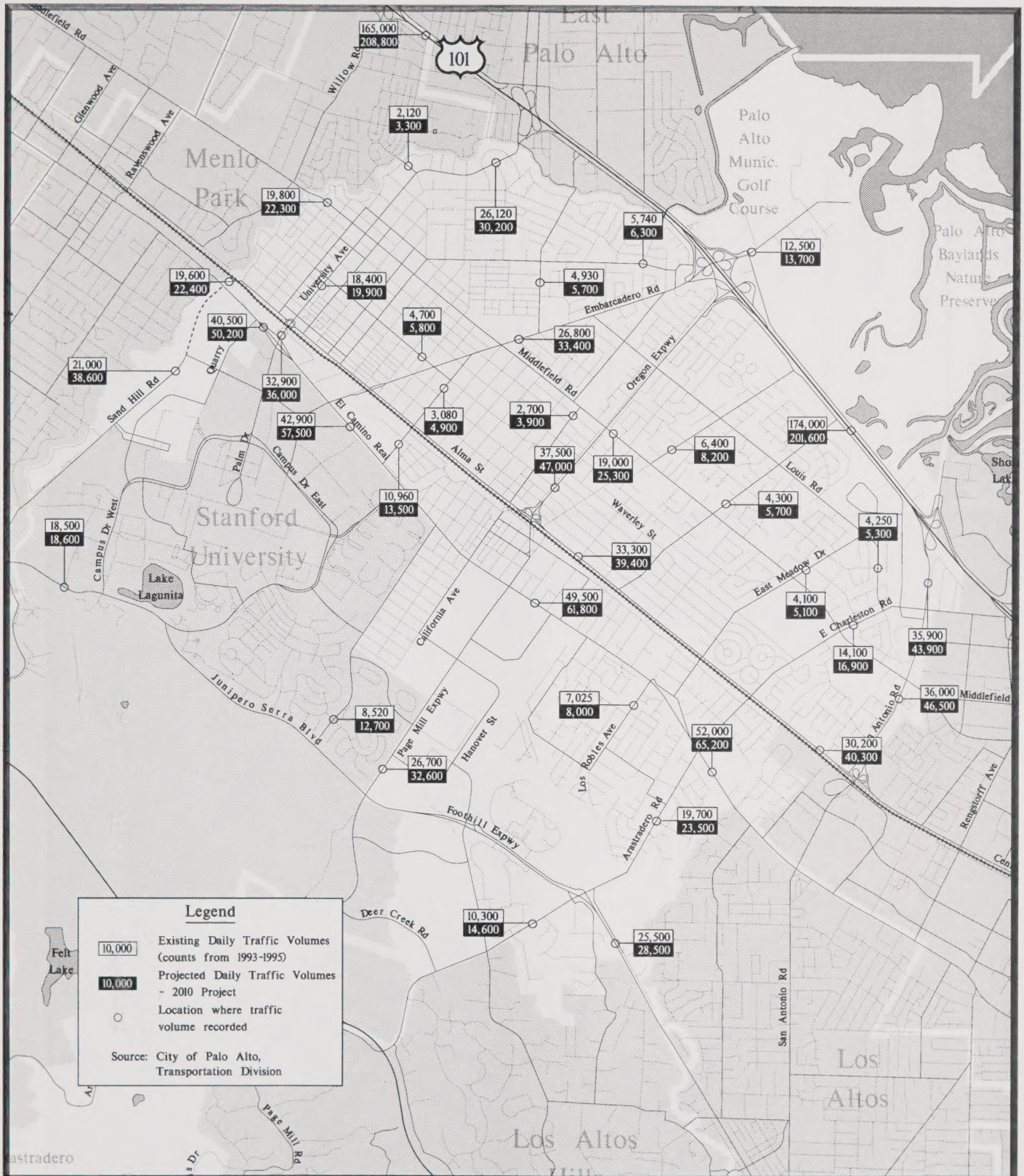

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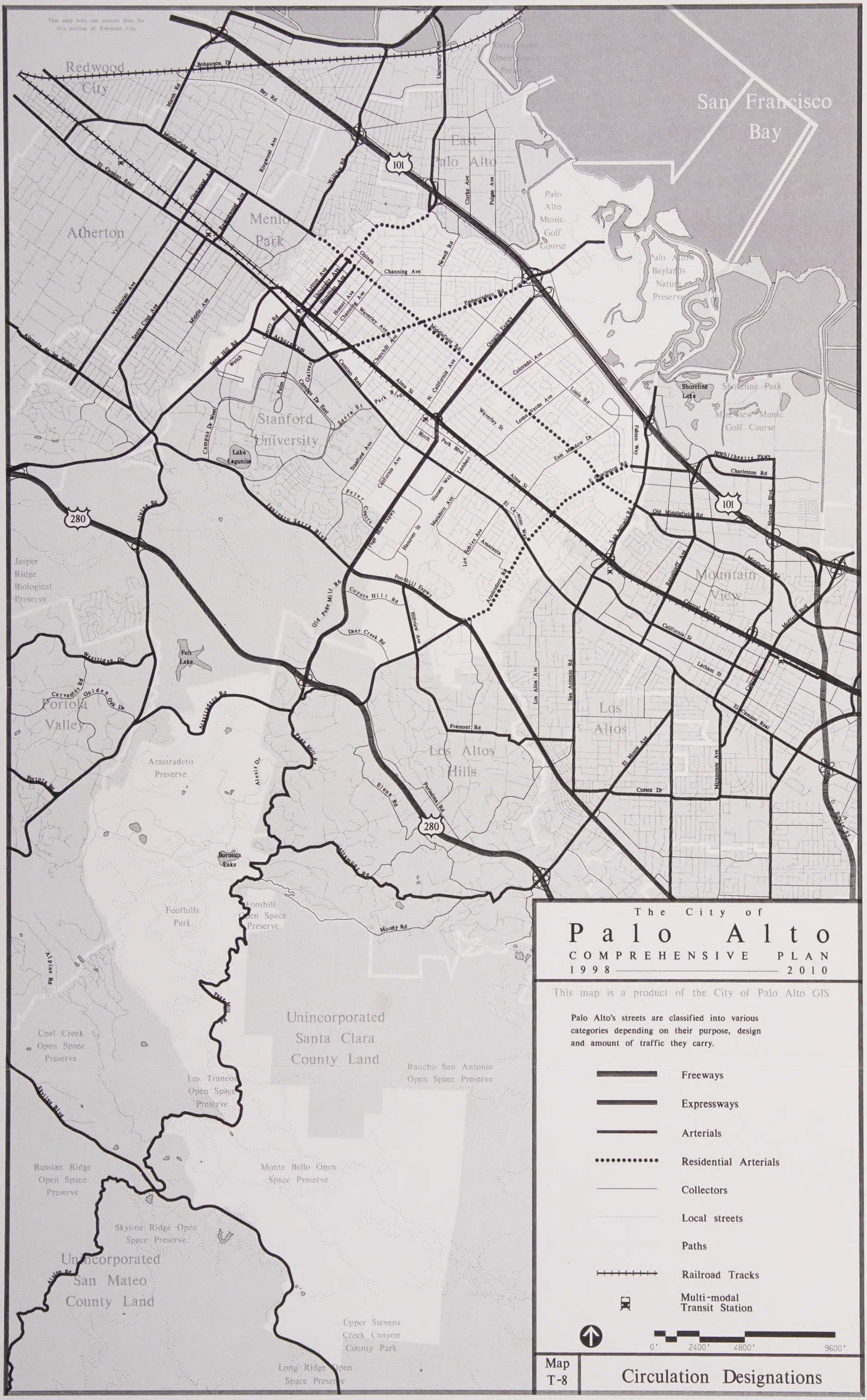

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

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Palo Alto's streets are classified into various categories depending on their purpose, design and amount of traffic they carry.

- Freeways
- Expressways
- Arterials
- Residential Arterials
- Collectors
- Local streets
- Paths
- Railroad Tracks
- Multi-modal Transit Station

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map T-8

Circulation Designations

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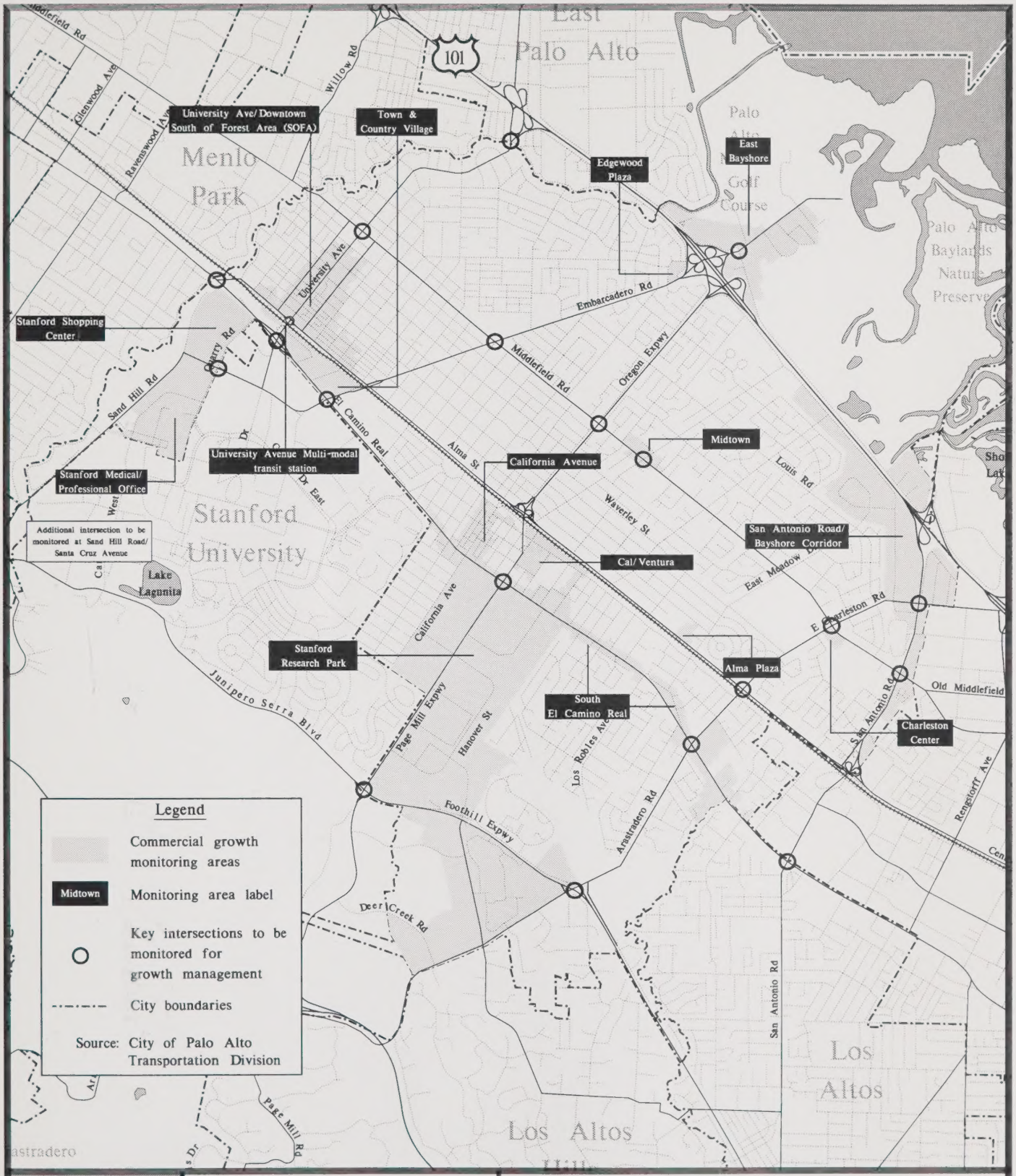

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The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

Map T-9

Key Intersections & Commercial Growth Monitoring Areas

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Vision Statement

Palo Alto will aggressively pursue a variety of housing opportunities that enhance the character, diversity and vitality of the City. The City is committed to increasing the development of affordable and market-rate housing, including converting non-residential lands to residential or mixed use. Existing housing, particularly rental units will be conserved and rehabilitated or replaced. Palo Alto will continue its strong commitment to supporting agencies that assist households with special needs. The City will foster an environment free of discrimination and the barriers that prevent choice in housing. It will place special emphasis on family housing and housing that addresses the health care, child care, transit, recreation and social service needs of all Palo Alto residents.

Introduction

State law mandates that the Housing Element contain specific data, address certain topics, and establish a workable strategy for meeting the City's share of the region's housing needs. The State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) must periodically review the Housing Element for adequacy and completeness. Because much of the information required for State review of the Housing Element is statistical and must be updated every five years, Palo Alto has prepared a separate Technical Document that supplements the Comprehensive Plan. This document includes the data required for HCD review to determine compliance with State law, is incorporated by reference as part of the Comprehensive Plan, and is included in the appendix.

This chapter begins with a synopsis of the more detailed information found in the Technical Document. It proceeds with the City's housing goals, policies, and programs and briefly describes the City's five-year implementation program including targets for the housing production and conservation. Additional text on the City's programs may be found in the Technical Document.

Existing Conditions

POPULATION

Palo Alto's population has increased only slightly during the last 30 years. The number of residents increased by 4.7% from 55,966 in 1970 to 58,598 in 2000 with most of this growth occurring between 1990-2000. While the average number of people per household declined from 2.7 in 1970 to 2.3 in 2000, the number of housing units increased.

Although 72.8 percent of Palo Alto's population is white, the City is becoming more ethnically diverse. Asians and Pacific Islanders increased their share of the City's population growing from 10 percent to 17.3 percent, while 4.6 percent are Hispanic, 2 percent are black and 3.3 percent identify themselves as other.

12/02

City of Palo Alto 2000 Population by Race/Ethnicity

White	72.8%
Black	2.0%
Hispanic	4.6%
Asian/Pacific Islander	17.3%
Other*	3.3%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census.
*The other category is remnant of population not positively identified under any other racial or ethnic category.

City of Palo Alto 2000 Population by Age

Pre-School (Under 5)	5.1%
School Age (5-17)	16.1%
Child Bearing (18-44)	37.3%
Middle Age (45-64)	25.9%
Senior (65 and over)	15.6%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

The median age of Palo Alto's population has increased dramatically over the last few decades. In 1970, the median age was 29.5 for men and 33.7 for women. By 1990, these figures had increased to 36.7 and 40.0 respectively. In the year 2000, the median age for the entire population of Palo Alto was 40.2 years, which is considerably higher than the County median age of 34 years. The increase in median age has been accompanied by an increase in Palo Alto's senior population; the number of persons over 65 increased from 10 to 15.6 percent of the population between 1970 and 2000. The number of older adults is expected to continue to increase in the future. At the other end of the age spectrum, the number of children under five has increased significantly over the last two decades and has resulted in an increase in the number of children entering childcare and school. However, the number of women of childbearing age has decreased markedly after increasing during the 1980s and 1990s and the middle-aged population has increased significantly indicating that Palo Alto will continue to grow older during the next decade.

Housing Units

The 2000 Census indicated that there were 26,048 housing units in Palo Alto. This was an increase of 860 units from 1990. About one-third of the City's homes were built during the 1950s, the period of greatest housing construction in Palo Alto's history. Since 1960, the rate of production has generally declined. From 1970 to 1980, homes were added at a rate

of about 240 units per year. By the 1990's, the annual rate had decreased to about 86 units per year as a result of economic factors and the limited availability of residential land.

Population, Household Size and Housing Units 1970-2000

	Population	Percent Change	Household Size	Percent Change	Housing Units	Percent Change
1970	55,966	-	2.7	-	21,338	-
1980	55,225	-1.3%	2.3	-14.8%	23,747	+11.3%
1990	55,900	+1.2%	2.2	-4.3%	25,188	+6.1%
2000	58,598	+4.8%	2.3	+4.5%	26,048	+3.4%

Income, Rent and House Values 1970-2000

	Single Family Home Value	Percent Change	Rent/Month	Percent Change	Median Income	Percent Change
1970	$33,900	-	$162	-	$12,200	-
1980	$148,900	+ 339%	$348	+ 115%	$24,700	+ 102%
1990	$457,800	+ 207%	$851	+ 145%	$55,333	+ 124%
2000	$1,006,600	+ 120%	$1349	+ 59%	$90,377	+ 63%

INCOME

Palo Alto is an affluent community with incomes considerably higher than the regional average. In 1996, median family of four income was $77,500, compared to $67,400 in Santa Clara County. In 2000, the median household income for Santa Clara County was $74,335 while the City of Palo Alto's median household income was $90,377. Palo Alto households maintained their 1996 proportional advantage in higher family incomes (about 21.59%).

The City also has a significant number of lower income households. In 1990, about 20 percent of Palo Alto's households reported an income of under $25,000, which was almost the same proportion as in the County as a whole. In the year 2000, Census data indicates that approximately 14% of Palo Alto households had a household income of less than $25,000; the City of Palo Alto maintained its proportion of lower income households in relation to Santa Clara County's lower income households. It should be noted, however, that a $25,000 annual income would not be an accurate reflection in the year 2000 of the number of lower or "limited" income households in Palo Alto. For example, HUD considers a family of four earning $43,500 or less and a single person earning $30,450 or

less to be very low income. A $25,000 income would be inadequate to meet the housing and other needs of most households in Palo Alto.

There is also a disparity between income levels based on the type of household. For instance, the average income for married couples in 2000 was over two times the figure for female-headed single parent households. Such disparity can be attributed to a substantial proportion of married couple households having two wage earners while single parent households, by definition, only have one.

Housing Cost

Housing in Palo Alto is expensive. The median sales price for a single family detached home in 2000 was $1,006,600. Using traditional underwriting criteria, an annual income of approximately $275,000 would be required to purchase such a home. Even the median priced condominium, at $546,000, would require an annual income of $163,000. Home ownership is only affordable to households with above moderate incomes. The cost of rental housing has also risen sharply. In fact, housing costs doubled between 1996 and 2000 for all types of housing in Palo Alto. At the same time, vacancy rates have remained low, traditionally less than 3 percent for both owner- and renter-occupied units. Housing costs have risen at a much greater rate than family or household incomes.

Housing Opportunities

Palo Alto has an extremely limited supply of vacant residential land. Most of the City's development potential consists of infill on small vacant lots, redevelopment of existing properties, and conversion of underutilized non-residential lands to higher density residential or mixed use projects. The City will continue to seek opportunities to rezone commercial lands to residential uses and strongly discourage the conversion of residential lands to non-residential use. In appropriate locations, mixed use will be encouraged to provide housing opportunities. Although the City's 1978 Zoning Ordinance recognizes mixed use as a viable housing type, the lack of clear mixed use zoning regulations has been an obstacle to housing production in such projects. This Comprehensive Plan encourages innovative ideas for creating new housing, including mixed use zoning, the use of smaller lots, live/work projects, and other emerging housing prototypes. In particular, the City has engaged in, and will continue to conduct, a Housing Opportunities Study that identifies non-residential sites appropriate for conversion to residential or mixed use and is committed to rezoning sufficient sites by 2004 to meet the City's fair share of the region's 1999-2006 housing need.

Palo Alto has been very active in promoting and supporting affordable housing. Since the late 1960s, the City has aggressively used local, state, and federal housing assistance programs for very low-, low-, and moderate- income households. These programs resulted in the construction of 745 subsidized affordable units in the 1970s, 196 in the 1980s, and about 380 in the 1990s. Curtailment of many state and federal programs during the 1980s

and 1990s has meant fewer affordable housing opportunities and greater reliance on local funding to supplement state and federal programs.

Local programs include the City's Inclusionary Housing or Below Market Rate (BMR) program. The program was initiated in 1974 as a means of increasing the supply of housing affordable to individuals and families with low to moderate incomes. It continues to be an extremely important part of the City's strategy to meet its housing needs. The City also maintains a "Housing Development Fund" that can be used for acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of housing. The funds are primarily available to nonprofit groups who agree to maintain the long-term affordability of the housing units.

Housing Needs

State Housing Element law requires that localities provide for their "fair share" of the region's housing need. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) determined that Palo Alto's projected need for the period from January 1, 1999 – June 30, 2006 was 1,397 units. This number has been reduced to 616 by the number of housing units completed and occupied or approved (building permits issued) through the end of 2000. All of these remaining units must be affordable to very low-, low- and moderate-income households as described below.

Housing Needs by Income Level

In addition to projecting overall housing needs, ABAG also projects housing needs by income category. The intent of this action is to equitably distribute households by income category so that no one City or County is "impacted" with a particular income group. Four income categories are defined by the federal government and are used by ABAG, as defined in the following box.

Standard definitions of Household Income (2000)

Very Low-Income: Households with incomes between 0 and 50 percent of County median family income. 2000 limit for a family of 4: $43,500.
Low-Income: Households with incomes between 51 and 80 percent of County median family income. 2000 limit for a family of 4: $69,600.
Moderate-Income: Households with incomes between 81 and 120 percent of County median family income. 2000 limit for a family of 4: $104,400.
Above Moderate-Income: Households with incomes greater than 120 percent of County median family income: over $104,400.
Some agencies and programs use different definitions of household income. In Palo Alto, the following modifications applied in 2000: For the HUD Section 8 rental programs and the CDBG Program, the 2000 limit for a family of four was $53,853. For the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit and HUD HOME Programs, the Low-Income maximum is 60 percent of the County median. The 1997 2000 limit for a family of four was $52,200. For the City

of Palo Alto BMR Program, Moderate-Income for home ownership is 80 to 100 percent of the County median. The 2000 limit for a family of four was $87,000.

The table below shows how the City of Palo Alto's 1999-2006 Housing Element allocated the ABAG new construction need by income category. One hundred and forty-three (143) of the 843 units built or approved have been constructed and are already occupied or are ready for occupancy. The remaining 700 units have received building permits and are in the process of being built. Most of these units should be ready for occupancy by the end of 2001.

ABAG Fair Share Housing Needs Table, 1999-2006

Income Level	1999-2006 Need	1999-2002 Built or Approved Units	Unmet Need
Very Low	265	24	241
Low	116	66	50
Moderate	343	24	319
Subtotal of Affordable Units	*724*	*114*	*610*
Above Moderate	673	860	None
TOTAL	**1,397**	**974**	**610**

In reviewing the totals shown in the table above, it appears that Palo Alto has already constructed, or approved for construction, about 56% of its fair share of the region's housing need. It should be noted that the totals on the ABAG Fair Share Housing Needs Table include 187 more above moderate income units than required by ABAG's assessment of Palo Alto's fair share of the region's housing need for 1999-2006. Only 114 of 724 affordable units needed, or about 16% of Palo Alto's total need for affordable housing, have currently been built or approved for construction. Palo Alto's current unmet housing need for 1999-2006 consists of 610 housing units that need to be affordable to very low-, low- or moderate-income households.

Goals, Policies, and Programs

Housing Opportunities

Goal H-1: A Supply of Affordable and Market Rate Housing That Meets Palo Alto's Share of Regional Housing Needs.

The Mid-Peninsula area of the San Francisco Bay region has limited housing opportunities relative to the number of jobs. The Comprehensive Plan's policies and programs promote a variety of housing opportunities for all income ranges. Housing diversity will enhance Palo Alto's social and economic strength. A commitment to the increased production of housing for all income levels will help the City continue to be a distinctive, diverse and desirable place to live. Residents will benefit from an increased awareness about housing needs, diversity and opportunities. The policies and programs for attaining this goal shall be implemented at specific locations identified in the Housing Sites Inventory and identified in a revised zoning map and amended Comprehensive Plan Land Use map resulting from the Zoning Ordinance Update.

Policy H-1:

Meet community and neighborhood needs as the supply of housing is increased. Ensure the preservation of the unique character of the City's existing neighborhoods.

Increasing the housing supply meets an important citywide need. However, to be truly beneficial for all Palo Altans, new housing must be designed and located in a way that enhances the character of existing neighborhoods. Increases in the housing supply should be accomplished without diminishing the quality of City services or surpassing the capacity of infrastructure and transportation facilities.

Policy H-2:

Identify and implement a variety of strategies to increase housing density and diversity in appropriate locations. Emphasize and encourage the development of affordable and attainable housing.

Program H-1:

Increase housing density immediately surrounding commercial areas and particularly near transit stations by either increasing allowed densities or encouraging development at the higher end of the existing density range for sites within 2,000 feet of an existing or planned transit station or along two major transit corridors, El Camino Real and San Antonio Road, wherever appropriate.

Palo Alto has a variety of commercial and mixed commercial/residential areas (such as California Avenue), two multi-modal transit centers, and a network of bus routes serving

its commercial areas. Allowing increased density in these areas achieves a number of important objectives. It allows the housing supply to be increased while minimizing visual and physical impacts on nearby lower density areas. It also encourages the use of transit, reduces auto dependency, and supports the City's air quality goals.

PROGRAM H-2:

Encourage development densities at the higher end of allowed density ranges in multiple family zones by using methods such as preferential or priority processing and application fee reductions for projects that propose development at the higher end of a site's allowed density range and that provide affordable housing in excess of mandatory BMR program requirements. Consider increasing minimum density requirements in multiple family zones as well as in all Comprehensive Plan land use designations that permit housing.

Most recent housing developments in Palo Alto have not been constructed to the maximum densities allowed by zoning. Market conditions, bank financing, and insurance requirements have favored the construction of single family detached houses. To increase housing supply and obtain densities closer to those envisioned by zoning policies, the City should establish increased minimum density standards in appropriate multiple family zoning districts as part of the Zoning Ordinance Update currently underway. This is particularly important given the limited number of vacant sites remaining in Palo Alto and their potential contribution towards meeting the City's housing needs.

PROGRAM H-3:

Encourage the conversion of non-residential lands to residential use to both increase the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing, and decrease the potential for the creation of new jobs that exacerbate the need for new housing. Land use and development applications that propose the conversion of non-residential land to residential or mixed use development will be given preferential or priority processing to encourage such conversion.

Palo Alto has a significant surplus of jobs compared to its housing supply, which has contributed to the City's inability to provide an adequate supply of affordable housing. This program attempts to redress the jobs/housing imbalance by reducing potential job growth while increasing the supply of housing, including affordable housing through the conversion of non-residential job generating uses to residential uses. This type of conversion should assist the City in reducing traffic congestion and poor air quality by bringing housing closer to employment centers. This would allow for the internalization of commute trips and encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation due to the increased proximity of housing and jobs.

PROGRAM H-4:

Allow increased residential densities and mixed use development only where adequate urban services and amenities can be provided and, in cases where the change in zoning is likely to lead to traffic congestion that will reduce levels of service below those acceptable to the City, adopt mitigation measures that will avoid this impact.

Palo Altans have expressed the concern that additional residential growth including mixed residential/non-residential forms of development may strain the City's ability to provide adequate urban services and amenities, such as parks, and may reduce the quality of life of the City's residents and neighborhoods. There is also a concern about increased traffic congestion. This program seeks to balance the City's need to provide housing with its abilities to provide the services and environmental conditions needed to adequately support that housing and provide attractive places to live and work. The City has adopted fees to address the impact of new development on parks, libraries and community centers; it anticipates adopting citywide transportation impact fees to mitigate traffic impacts.

PROGRAM H-5:

Consider the following modifications during the Zoning Ordinance Update currently underway and incorporate those modifications in the revised Zoning Ordinance that are conducive to increasing the production of affordable housing by the year 2004.

Density Limits and Residential Uses

- *Specify the range of housing densities appropriate for each commercial and industrial Comprehensive Plan land use designation and zoning district that permits housing. For proposed projects located within 2,000 feet of an existing or planned rail transit station not adjacent to a single family neighborhood with a substantial proportion of a proposed project's units affordable to very low-, low-, or moderate-income households, development may be allowed at a higher density than that normally allowed under these land use designations and zoning districts. Development at the high end of the density range should only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the project will make significant use of existing transit facilities or other alternative modes of transportation, thereby avoiding significantly degrading existing traffic levels of service on nearby intersections.*

- *Consider allowing higher densities on sites that are not precisely within 2,000 feet of a rail transit station but that may be suitable for transit oriented development due to exceptional access to other transit opportunities or alternative modes of transportation. Development of these sites should be compatible with surrounding densities and intensities of development and should be designed to preserve neighborhood character. Development of these sites at the high end of the density range should only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the project will make significant use of existing transit*

facilities or other alternative modes of transportation and will not significantly degrade existing traffic levels of service on nearby intersections.

- *Allow the construction of affordable housing on surplus sites designated Major Institution/Special Facilities under the Comprehensive Plan or zoned for Public Facilities, excepting those areas that are used for open space or playgrounds. Development of these sites should be compatible with surrounding densities and intensities of development and should be designed to preserve neighborhood character. Consideration should also be given to encouraging the conversion of portions of buildings or sites (e.g., religious institutions) to allow ancillary residential uses, such as caretaker quarters, by modifying pertinent sections of the Zoning Ordinance and Building Code.*
- *Allow a high or very high residential density under the Mixed Use land use designation for those sites within 2,000 feet of an existing or planned rail transit station unless adjacent to single family neighborhoods. In areas adjacent to single family neighborhoods, require lower densities as a buffer. Development at the high end of the density range should only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the project will make significant use of existing transit facilities or other alternative modes of transportation and will not significantly degrade existing traffic levels of service on nearby intersections.*
- *Restrict the size of main units under the DHS Zoning District and ensure that second units are adequate to accommodate a second household.*
- *Address the loss of housing due to the combination of single family residential lots. Consider modifying the R-1 Zoning District to create a maximum lot size to prevent the loss of housing or housing opportunities.*
- *Permit higher densities under the R-1 Zoning District to accommodate smaller lots for courtyard homes or other similar types of housing.*
- *Increase the minimum density of the RM-15 Zoning District to at least eight dwelling units per acre consistent with the multi-family land use designation under the Comprehensive Plan.*

New Development Standards and Zoning Districts

- *For projects that are 100% affordable, allow for increased flexibility in the application of development standards, such as parking and height, to better implement the housing programs contained in this chapter and to encourage the production of affordable housing.*
- *Floor area ratio limits should be made flexible for the purpose of creating affordable housing. Maximum unit sizes should also be considered to encourage the production of more affordable housing. The use of a "form" code to achieve these objectives should be considered during the Zoning Ordinance Update.*

- *Create new zoning districts to implement the Transit-Oriented Residential and Village Residential land use designations and establish development standards that allow the maximum amount of housing, particularly for affordable housing projects, permitted under the allowed density range while preserving the character of adjacent neighborhoods.*
- *Create development standards for permitted mixed residential/non-residential uses that would permit a number of dwelling units, including a minimum number of affordable housing units, to be built with each project. Mixed uses with an office component should be discouraged. The definition of mixed use development and the standards to be utilized in such developments will be addressed during the Zoning Ordinance Update.*

Over the past few years, Palo Alto has not been able to take full advantage of the housing opportunities provided by the variety of lands that allow residential use, particularly in terms of achieving the levels of development allowed by the City's permitted density ranges. Development standards contained in the City's Zoning Ordinance have not allowed the full residential development potential of mixed use projects permitted in industrial and commercial zoning districts to be achieved. Certain Comprehensive Plan land use designations, such as Transit-Oriented Residential, have not been implemented because the City has no corresponding zoning district which can be used to take advantage of sites near transit stations. The creation of new zoning districts is essential to Palo Alto's strategy of reusing non-residential developed lands for residential use to increase the City's housing supply and more efficiently use the limited land available for housing. Palo Alto also lost irreplaceable housing opportunities due to single family lot combinations resulting in larger lots but fewer dwelling units. Since housing supplies are so limited, the loss of development potential on any residential site must be discouraged. The purpose of the programs listed above is to ensure that Palo Alto efficiently uses its limited land supply and makes the most of its opportunities to provide both market rate and affordable housing. Palo Alto is updating its Zoning Ordinance, which provides a timely mechanism for implementing the programs described above. During the review process for the Zoning Ordinance, the City should carefully examine allowing densities of up to 50 dwelling units per acre, on mixed use sites, sites near transit stations, and sites along two major transportation corridors, El Camino Real and San Antonio Road, to both provide more affordable housing and to support transit use. Fifty dwelling units per acre is currently the highest density allowed by the Comprehensive Plan and is limited to sites designated Transit-Oriented Residential and located within 2,000 feet of a transit station. There may be other sites, however, that are suitable for this density, or higher densities than the current zoning allows, and near transit facilities that are not precisely within the 2,000-foot radius of a transit station but that have good access to rail or major bus transit facilities and not adjacent to single family neighborhoods. The City should evaluate its options to accommodate such opportunities, such as creating development standards that would allow such densities to be achieved while still maintaining the desirable character of Palo Alto.

PROGRAM H-6:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, create zoning incentives that encourage the development of diverse housing types, such as smaller, more affordable units and two- and three-bedroom units suitable for families with children. Consider using a "form" code to achieve these objectives.

A variety of housing types are desired in Palo Alto to address the broad spectrum of needs. By providing incentives to develop housing units of less than 1,200 square feet, the affordability and number of potential units can be increased. Incentives to develop such housing should be pursued. Incentives might include reduced parking or open space requirements, density bonuses, reduced lot coverage standards, flexible height limits, increased floor area ratios, or City financial participation. Certain locations near schools, parks, and quiet streets provide the best sites for households with children.

PROGRAM H-7:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, modify the provisions, such as parking requirements, minimum lot size, and coverage and floor area ratio limits, that govern the development of second dwelling units, in single family areas to encourage the production of such units. Consider using a "form" code to achieve these objectives.

Second units can provide additional rental housing that is both desirable and unobtrusive. The current cottage regulations should be evaluated to determine how additional units might be provided through increased flexibility in the regulations such as reduced parking requirements, limiting the maximum size of the unit, allowing for attached units, and reducing the minimum lot size requirement. Appropriate development controls and review procedures should ensure compatibility with adjacent properties.

PROGRAM H-8:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, modify the Zoning Code to allow second dwelling units that are incorporated entirely within the existing main dwelling, or that require only a small addition (200 square feet or less) and limited exterior modifications, to be approved through a ministerial permit (i.e., no design review or public hearing) on sites that meet the minimum development standards, including the parking requirement.

PROGRAM H-9:

Explore creating an amnesty program to legitimize existing illegal second units where appropriate and consistent with maintaining the character and quality of life of existing neighborhoods. The grant of amnesty should be contingent on compliance with minimum building, housing and other applicable code standards and on maintaining the affordability of the second unit to very low-, low- or moderate-income households.

PROGRAM H-10:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, create a Planned Development zone that allows the construction of smaller lot single family units and other innovative housing types without the requirement for a public benefit finding provided that the project significantly increases the number of affordable housing units on the site over what would otherwise be allowed by existing zoning.

A designation similar to the existing "Planned Community" zone would allow flexibility in design while providing a highly inclusive public review process. Because there is such a strong need for housing in the City, the requirement for a public benefit finding can be eliminated if the project significantly increases the affordable housing supply over what would otherwise be allowed by existing zoning. While new zoning regulations are anticipated to implement the "Village Residential" land use designation, it is not possible to predict all of the prototypes the market will invent. Therefore, a flexible zoning designation is desirable.

PROGRAM H-11:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, amend zoning regulations to permit residential lots of less than 6,000 square feet where smaller lots would be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Many Palo Alto neighborhoods have lots that are smaller than the 6,000 square foot minimum currently required by zoning. Allowing additional smaller lots would result in more units, create greater housing opportunities, and remain compatible and consistent with existing development patterns.

PROGRAM H-12:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, amend the Zoning Code to reduce parking requirements for higher density development in appropriate areas thus reducing development costs and producing housing that is more affordable. The potential consequences of reducing parking will be evaluated for particular types of projects during the Zoning Ordinance Update, but parking reductions should primarily be considered for Transit-Oriented development or developments that can demonstrate that its need for parking is less than the required parking standard called for by the Zoning Ordinance.

POLICY H-3:

Continue to support the re-designation of suitable vacant or underutilized lands for housing or mixed uses containing housing.

PROGRAM H-13:

Implement the Housing Opportunities Study that identifies vacant and underutilized sites and sites with existing non-residential uses that are suitable for future housing or mixed use development focusing particularly on sites near an existing or planned transit station, along major transportation corridors with bus service, and in areas with adequate

urban services and supporting retail and service uses.

- *Suitable housing sites currently planned and zoned for non-residential use should be designated for residential or mixed use in sufficient quantities to accommodate the City's fair share of the region's housing needs.*
- *Convert sites near transit and other major transportation facilities to higher density residential and mixed use to reinforce the City's policies supporting transit use, create a pedestrian friendly environment, and reduce reliance on the automobile as well as increase the supply of housing, consistent with the City's policies of encouraging compact, infill development and optimizing the use of existing urban services.*
- *Work with Stanford University to identify sites suitable for housing that may be located in the Stanford Research Park.*

PROGRAM H-14:

Rezone, where necessary, those sites identified on the Housing Sites Inventory, using appropriate residential or mixed use zoning districts, prior to 2004.

The Housing Sites Inventory identifies a list of potential housing sites and contains those sites that are the most suitable and likely to be developed for residential purposes in the time frame of this Housing Element. Many of these sites are already zoned for residential development at a suitable intensity. The rezoning of the balance of the sites listed on the Inventory must be accomplished by 2004 to provide sufficient opportunity for the development community and the City to process and build new housing developments prior to the June 30, 2006 planning horizon of this Housing Element.

PROGRAM H-15:

Conduct a special study of the El Camino Real transportation corridor to examine in detail the potential for developing higher density housing, especially affordable housing, on specific residential or non-residential sites consistent with the City's traffic level of service policies, the City's ability to provide urban services and amenities and the preservation of the character and quality of life of adjacent neighborhoods.

The El Camino Real transportation corridor provides a significant opportunity to plan for new residential or appropriate mixed uses that can support affordable housing and take advantage of the frequent bus service provided along this corridor. A substantial portion of the City's future housing supply may be provided on the underutilized commercial sites located along this corridor, but such development requires careful evaluation by the City in terms of potential environmental constraints, such as traffic and potential visual and other impacts on adjacent neighborhoods, and the City's limited ability to provide additional urban services. Residential developments that are designed to encourage the use of bus transit, or that use bus transit to access rail transit, would be particularly beneficial and desirable for affordable housing projects.

POLICY H-4:

Encourage mixed use projects as a means of increasing the housing supply while promoting diversity and neighborhood vitality.

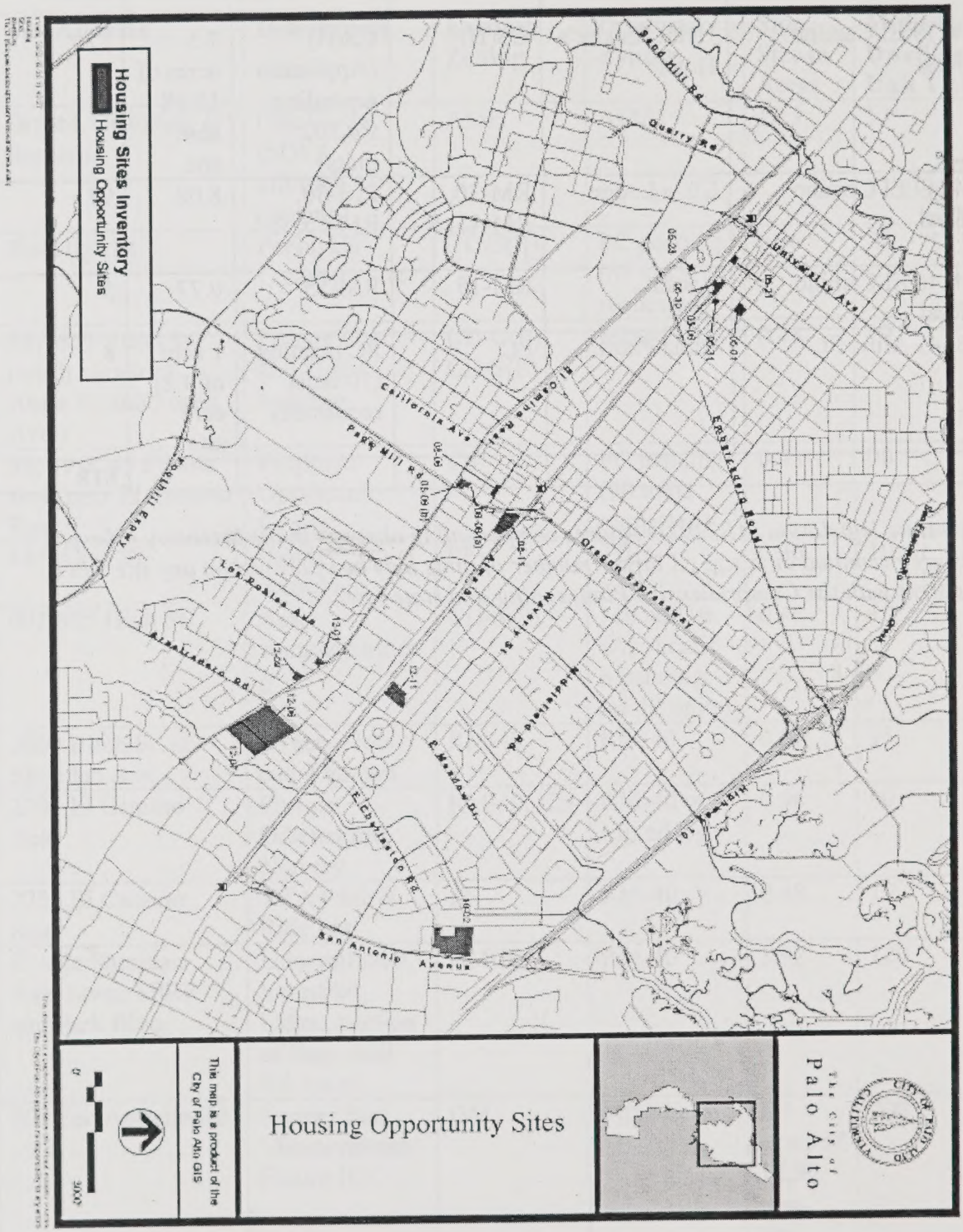
Commercial areas and parking lots offer some of the best opportunities for new housing. Residences can be built over stores, parking lots and even some industrial buildings. Parking lots may be able to serve a dual purpose, serving businesses by day and residences by night. Mixed use projects should not be limited to "vertical" integration in a single building, but should also include locations where residential and commercial uses exist side by side. Mixed use projects that create new office space should be discouraged since office development tends to increase the City's existing traffic congestion and air quality problems.

Housing Sites Inventory

Site No.	Site Address	Description	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Site Size in Acres	Minimum Dwelling Unit Yield *
5-01	Bryant, Channing & Ramona	Oak Court (SOFA affordable housing)	AMF	AMF	1.23	53
5-06	800 High St.	Peninsula Creamery site	CD-S(P)	PC pending (61 units requested)	0.96	26
5-21	657-663 Alma St. (north corner of Alma St. and Forest Ave.)	Former Craft and Floral building	CD-C(P) CD-S(P)	Mixed Use	0.48	10
5-28	33, 39 & 45 Encina Ave. near El Camino Real	Proposed Opportunity Center	CS	PC pending (90 units requested)	0.43	90
5-30	841 Alma St.	Power substation	PF	TBD	0.36	10
5-31	901-925 High St.	Auto storage/parking	CD-S(P)	Mixed Use (Application pending for 12 units)	0.46	10
8-06	2650 Birch St. at Sheridan Ave.	2 vacant lots and 4 houses	RM-40	RM-40	0.57	15
8-09(a)	2701 El Camino Real	Former Greenworld Nursery	RM-40, CN	RM-40 or Mixed Use	0.98	30
8-09(b)	2755 El Camino Real	VTA Park & Ride Lot	PF	RM-40	0.48	15
8-11	E. side Sheridan Ave. btwn. SPRR and Park Blvd.	Underutilized industrial bldgs.; portion of Page Mill Rd. r.o.w.	GM(B)	RM-40	3.92	120
10-02	901 San Antonio Rd.	Former Sun Microsystems/ Future JCC	GM	Mixed Use	6.5 acres of 12,92 acre site	200
12-01	4102 El Camino Real at Vista	Former Blockbusters	RM-30	RM-30	0.65	9

12-06	4219 El Camino Real	Hyatt Rickey's Hotel	CS(H)	CS(H) (Application pending for 302 units)	7.5 acres of 15.98 acre site	120
12-07	4249 El Camino Real	Elk's Lodge	RM-30, RM-15, R-1	RM-30, RM-15, R-1	8.08	97
12-09	4146 El Camino Real	Vacant	RM-15	RM-15	0.77	5
12-11	3445 Alma St.	Alma Plaza	PC	PC pending (10 units requested)	1 acre of 4.21 acre site	8
Total						**818**

**New state legislation (AB2292) requires compensating changes in the inventory if fewer units are permitted on a site. A larger number of units may be approved on any site when consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, zoning and state law.*


Housing Sites Inventory
Housing Opportunity Sites
Housing Opportunity Sites
The City of Palo Alto
This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS
0
3000
Page Mill Rd
Quarry Rd
University Ave
El Camino Real
California Ave
Foothill Expwy
Los Robles Ave
Alma St
Middlefield Rd
Oregon Expressway
Embarcadero Rd
E. Meadow Dr
E. Charleston Rd
San Antonio Avenue
101

PROGRAM H-16:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, evaluate and improve existing incentives that encourage mixed use (with a residential component) and residential development on commercially zoned land and establish development standards that will encourage development of the maximum amount of housing permitted under the allowed density range, particularly for projects that provide affordable housing.

The City's current zoning regulations have been ineffective in encouraging significant numbers of mixed use projects, particularly those that are designed to provide affordable housing. Typically, projects require many variances from current development standards to be feasible from the market's standpoint. The regulations should be evaluated and revised to improve clarity, remove overly restrictive requirements and provide new incentives for mixed use.

PROGRAM H-17:

Use coordinated area plans and other tools to develop regulations that support the development of housing above and among commercial uses.

Coordinated area plans are intended to provide more specific guidance for development in areas where change is desired.

PROGRAM H-18:

Encourage the development of housing on or over parking lots by adopting incentives that will lead to housing production while maintaining the required parking.

One possible incentive to enable more housing is allowing the use of air rights to develop housing over parking. There may other incentives as well, which the City will explore.

PROGRAM H-19: (REVISED)

Eliminate the requirement for Site and Design review by the Planning Commission and City Council for mixed use projects shortly after development standards have been established for mixed use projects during the Zoning Ordinance Update expected to be completed in 2004.

Presently, mixed use projects require site and design review by the Architectural Review Board (ARB), Planning Commission, and City Council. Eliminating this requirement would expedite project approval and remove an impediment to housing production. Projects would still be subject to ARB review, providing opportunity for public comment and design review. Eliminating Planning Commission and City Council review of mixed use projects should not be considered until new development standards have been effectively implemented for mixed use projects.

POLICY H-5:

Discourage the conversion of lands designated as residential to non-residential uses and the use of multiple family residential lands by non-residential uses, such as schools and churches, unless there is no net loss of housing potential on a community-wide basis.

Residentially zoned land is a valuable commodity that should be preserved whenever possible. Since the 1960s, Palo Alto has changed the zoning of many parcels from non-

residential to residential. The reverse situation—rezoning or approving use permits on residential land for non-residential purposes—should only be approved when new housing opportunities that meet or exceed the number of potential units eliminated can be ensured.

PROGRAM H-20:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, change the Zoning Code to disallow uses other than residential uses in a multiple-family residential zone unless the project can demonstrate an overriding benefit to the public or the project results in no net planned or existing housing loss. Planning Commission and City Council approval would be required in such instances.

Conversion of multiple family residential lands to non-residential uses can significantly reduce the City's housing supply. The City must ensure that such lands are not converted to non-residential use unless there is an overarching public benefit from the project or the housing lost by development of a non-residential use on a multiple family site is replaced.

POLICY H-6:

Support the reduction of governmental and regulatory constraints to the production of affordable housing.

Zoning requirements, development review and approval procedures, fees, and building codes and standards will be reviewed regularly to eliminate barriers to affordable housing construction.

PROGRAM H-21:

Where appropriate and feasible, allow waivers of development fees as a means of promoting the development of housing affordable to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. Waivers should be considered for projects that proposed affordable housing units in excess of minimum City BMR Program standards either in terms of the number of the affordable units or the household income levels that the project is targeted to serve.

PROGRAM H-22:

Exempt permanently affordable housing units from any infrastructure impact fees that may be adopted by the City.

Housing units that are subject to long-term (forty years or greater) restrictions to maintain affordability and occupancy by very low-, low-, and moderate-income households should be exempt from future impact fees. Units provided under the Below Market Rate (BMR) Program should be included in the impact fee exemption.

PROGRAM H-23:

Require all City departments to expedite all processes, including applications, related to the construction of affordable housing above minimum BMR requirements.

POLICY H-7:

Monitor, on a regular basis, the City's progress in increasing the supply of housing and monitor the preservation of BMR rental units for very low- and low- income residents.

PROGRAM H-24:

Establish an annual monitoring program to review the progress made in the construction of housing for all income levels, the rezoning of suitable housing sites, and the implementation of policies to encourage the production of affordable housing.

HOUSING CONSERVATION

Goal H-2: Conservation and Maintenance of Palo Alto's Existing Housing Stock and Residential Neighborhoods.

Palo Alto has many fine neighborhoods with a variety of housing styles and types. Conserving and maintaining this housing will help preserve the character of the City's neighborhoods. Older housing may also be more affordable than newer housing. Preservation of this older housing stock will help maintain Palo Alto's limited supply of affordable housing.

POLICY H-8:

Promote the rehabilitation of deteriorating or substandard residential properties.

The general condition of the housing stock in Palo Alto is very good, partially due to the high price of homes. However, there are isolated structures and small sections of the community that may begin to turn downward unless the normal processes of deterioration are reversed. These areas need rehabilitation now, before major problems arise.

PROGRAM H-25:

Continue the citywide property maintenance, inspection, and enforcement program.

PROGRAM H-26:

Enact development regulations that encourage retention and rehabilitation of historic residential buildings, older multifamily rental buildings and smaller single family residences.

The City promotes code inspection as a service to residents and a deterrent to neighborhood deterioration.

POLICY H-9:

Maintain the number of multi-family housing units, including BMR rental and ownership units, in Palo Alto at no less than the number of multi-family rental and BMR units available as of December 2001 and continue to support efforts to increase the supply of these units.

Palo Alto has a limited supply of affordable housing relative to market demands. Very few private market rental projects have been built since the 1960s. Not surprisingly, the City's residential vacancy rate has consistently been below three percent over the last 20 years. Sharp increases in rents in the last half of the 1990s indicate that the City should continue to take the steps necessary to retain the supply of rental units and encourage the construction of new units. The City's BMR program provides both rental and ownership units to low and moderate income individuals and families. The preservation of the City's BMR housing stock is a priority for the City and retention of this housing stock needs to be ensured.

PROGRAM H-27:

Continue implementation of the Condominium Conversion Ordinance.

This Ordinance, enacted in 1974, restricts the conversion of apartments to condominiums and thereby helps the City maintain its rental stock. Palo Alto has not had a condominium conversion since 1980.

PROGRAM H-28:

Implement a Below Market Rate (BMR) Program Emergency Fund to prevent the loss of BMR units and to provide emergency loans for BMR unit owners for substantial mandatory assessments.

Eighty-four percent of Palo Alto's Below Market Rate (BMR) housing stock was built before 1990. With the aging of this important affordable housing asset, substantial, costly repairs to individual housing developments are likely. The City has established a Below Market Rate (BMR) Program Emergency Fund to assist BMR homeowners with low incomes and limited assets that are facing hardships at housing developments with special assessments for repairs to common areas. In addition, this Program is designed to ensure preservation of the BMR housing stock by preventing loss through foreclosure or problems with the resale process.

PROGRAM H-29:

Where a proposed subdivision or condominium would cause a loss of rental housing, grant approval only if at least two of the following three circumstances exist:

- *The project will produce at least a 100 percent increase in the number of units currently on the site and will comply with the City's Below Market Rate (BMR) program (described in Program H-34 or 35); and/or*
- *The number of rental units to be provided on the site is at least equal to the number of existing rental units; and/or*
- *No less than 25 percent of the units will comply with the City's BMR program.*

Many existing developments in Palo Alto contain units that are smaller and more affordable than those that would be built today. This program limits the removal of such units unless there is a significant net gain of housing or a replacement of rental units or affordable units. The program applies to the most recent number of rental units on the site whether or not they have been demolished. All units after the first unit are considered rentals.

POLICY H-10:

Preserve the existing legal, non-conforming rental cottages and duplexes currently located in the R-1 and R-2 residential areas of Palo Alto, which represent a significant portion of the City's affordable housing supply.

PROGRAM H-30:

Require developers of new residential projects in the R-1 and R-2 Zoning Districts to preserve and incorporate, where feasible, existing rental

cottages or duplexes within the project. Explore the feasibility of requiring the developer to replace any units being demolished as a result of new construction.

In recent years, Palo Alto has lost some affordable housing due to the demolition of small cottages, houses and duplexes that are located on lots zoned for single family homes or duplexes. With the increasing cost of housing in Palo Alto and other threats to the City's affordable housing supply, Palo Alto must make every effort to preserve these types of units, which provide relatively affordable rental housing for small households.

POLICY H-11:

Encourage community involvement in the maintenance and enhancement of public and private properties and adjacent rights-of-way in residential neighborhoods.

PROGRAM H-31:

Create community volunteer days and park cleanups, plantings, or similar events that promote neighborhood enhancement.

PROGRAM H-32:

Conduct City-sponsored cleanup campaigns for public and private properties.

HOUSING DIVERSITY

Goal H-3: Housing Opportunities for a Diverse Population, Including Very low-, Low- and Moderate-Income Residents, and Persons with Special Needs.

The City will use public and private resources to provide housing that meets the City's "fair share" of the region's housing needs. These needs can not be met by the private market alone. Local, state, and federal resources will help the City achieve this goal.

POLICY H-12:

Encourage, foster and preserve diverse housing opportunities for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

PROGRAM H-33:

Take all actions necessary to preserve the 92-unit Terman Apartments as part of Palo Alto's affordable housing stock and to continue the renewal of the existing HUD Section 8 rental assistance contract that provides rental subsidies for up to 72 units in the project.

The Terman Apartments is the last major rental project located in Palo Alto that is at risk of conversion to market rate housing. State law requires that the project be offered for sale to providers of low-income housing if the owners elect to terminate their HUD Section 8 contract.

PROGRAM H-34:

Provide preferential or priority processing for those residential or mixed use projects that propose more affordable housing than the minimum required under the City's BMR Program and for 100% affordable housing projects.

POLICY H-13:

Provide for increased use and support of tenant/landlord educational and mediation opportunities.

PROGRAM H-35:

Implement the "Action Plan" of the City of Palo Alto's Consolidated Plan or its successor documents.

The Consolidated Plan is a required document for the receipt of federal funds through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It outlines actions to be taken to provide housing opportunities for very low- and low-income households. The overall Plan is updated every five years. The Plan and the Annual Action Plan are adopted by the City Council.

PROGRAM H-36:

Implement the City's "Below Market Rate" (BMR) Program by requiring that at least 15 percent of all housing units in projects of five units or more, be provided at below market rates to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. Projects on sites of five acres or larger must set aside 20 percent of all units as BMR units.

The City of Palo Alto's BMR program is intended to increase the supply of for-sale housing and rental housing for individuals and families whose incomes are insufficient to afford market rate housing. Since the program was initiated in 1974, 152 for-sale units and 101 rental units have been created. Continued affordability of the units is a major goal of the program. Deed restrictions control the resale price and limit rent increases. Occupancy for BMR units is determined according to City Council guidelines. The Palo Alto Housing Corporation, under contract to the City, has administered the program since its inception. Since the current rates of production of affordable housing in Palo Alto are very low, the BMR program requirement is essential to meet the City's need for affordable housing.

The Palo Alto Below Market Rate ("BMR") Program

Developers of projects with five or more units must comply with Palo Alto's BMR requirements. The BMR program objective is to obtain actual housing units or buildable parcels within each development rather than off-site units or in-lieu payments. At least 15 percent of the housing units developed in a project involving fewer than five acres of land must be provided as BMR units. Projects involving the development of five or more acres must provide at least 20 percent of all units developed as BMR units. (Projects that cause the loss of existing rental housing may need to provide a 25 percent BMR component, see Program H-29.) The BMR units must be comparable to other units in the development. For an application to be determined complete, the developer must agree to one or a combination of the following requirements or equivalent alternatives that are acceptable to the City.

For-Sale Units:

For projects with a 15 percent BMR component, the initial sales price for at least two-thirds of the BMR units must be affordable to a household making between 80 to 100 percent of the Santa Clara County median income, taking into consideration all housing expenses such as mortgage payment, taxes, insurance, and association dues. The initial sales prices of the remaining BMR units may be set at higher levels affordable to households earning between 100 to 120 percent of the County's median income. For projects with a 20 percent BMR component, three-fourths of the BMR units must be affordable to households in the 80 to 100 percent of median income range, and one-fourth may be in the higher price range of between 100 to 120 percent of the County's median income. For projects with a 25 percent BMR component, four-fifths of the BMR units must be affordable to households in the 80 to 100 percent of median range, and one-fifth may be in the higher price range of between 100 and 120 percent of the County's median income. In all cases, the sales price should be sufficient to cover the estimated cost to the

developer of constructing the BMR unit, including financing, but excluding land, marketing, off-site improvements, and profit.

If the City determines that on-site BMR units are not feasible, off-site units acceptable to the City, or vacant land determined to be suitable for affordable housing construction, may be provided instead. Off-site units should normally be new units, but the City may accept rehabilitated existing units when significant improvement in the City's housing stock is demonstrated.

In-Lieu Payments: If the City determines that no other alternative is feasible, a cash payment to the City's Housing Development Fund, in lieu of providing BMR units or land, may be accepted. The in-lieu payment for projects subject to the basic 15 percent BMR requirement shall be 7.5 percent of the greater of the actual sales price or fair market value of each unit. For projects subject to the 20 percent requirement, the rate is 10 percent; for projects with a 25 percent requirement, (as described in Program H-29 regarding the loss of rental housing), the rate is 12.5 percent.

Rental Units:

Developers of rental housing must provide the required percentage of MBR units at affordable rents for occupancy by very low (below 50% of the HUD median income) and low-income households (below 80% of median income). Occupancy, rents, rent increases and other provisions of the BMR rental program are governed by standards approved by the City Council and by project-specific recorded regulatory agreements. Initial rents for new BMR units are established annually by the City. After occupancy, initial rents may be adjusted annually by one-half of the Consumer Price Index Rent Residential or other comparable formula adopted by the City.

In-Lieu Payments: If the City determines that provision of BMR rental units on site is infeasible, it may accept a payment in lieu of such units to the City's Housing Development Fund. The annual payment shall be the difference between the initial affordable rent and the market rate rent of each required BMR unit. If a one-time in-lieu payment is accepted in full satisfaction of the project's BMR requirement, the payment shall be the appraised value of the housing project at market rate rents multiplied by the applicable fee rate. The fee rate is 7.5 percent for a project with a 15 percent BMR requirement, 10 percent for a project with a 20 percent BMR requirement and 12.5 percent for projects with a 25 percent BMR requirement.

Projects with a Condominium Map That Will Be Operated as Rental Housing:
No residential condominium map shall be approved without provision for the future sale of BMR ownership units or an equivalent alternative acceptable to the City, even though the project will be initially operated as rental housing.

Open Space (OS) District Projects:

The Open Space district sets a minimum lot size of ten acres. Projects of any acreage with fewer than 10 units or lots must provide a 15 percent BMR component. Projects with more than 10 units or lots must provide a 20 percent BMR component.

Subdivision of Land to be Sold Without Development:

Land that is subdivided into three or more lots and sold without construction of housing must transfer buildable parcel(s) equivalent to 15 percent (or other applicable BMR requirement percentage) of the development to the City or the City's designee. The buildable parcel(s) is to be used for the purpose of developing affordable housing units. The City may sell the buildable parcel(s) with the proceeds placed in the City's Housing Development Fund for future housing development. When the City determines that the transfer of land, or the construction of BMR units within the subdivision, is infeasible, a comparable in-lieu fee payment may be accepted by the City.

Fractional Units:

When the BMR requirement results in a fractional unit (for example: 16 units x 15% = 2.40 BMR units), an in-lieu payment to the City's Housing Development Fund may be made for the fractional unit (the 0.4 unit) instead of providing an actual BMR unit. The in-lieu fee percentage rate shall be the same as that otherwise required for the project (7.5 percent, 10 percent, or 12,5 percent). The fee on for-sale projects will be paid upon the sale of each market unit in the project. For rental projects, the fee shall be paid prior to approval by the City of occupancy of the project.

Larger Projects of 30 or More Units: Projects with 30 or more units must provide a whole BMR unit for any fractional unit of one-half (0.50) or larger; an in-lieu fee may be paid, or equivalent alternatives provided, when the fractional unit is less than one-half.

Adjustments, Waivers, Appeals of the BMR Requirement:

Within fifteen days of entering into a BMR agreement with the City for a project, the developer may request a determination that the BMR requirement, taken together with any inclusionary housing incentives, as applied the project, would legally constitute the taking of property without just compensation under the Constitution of the United States or of the State of California. The burden of proof shall be upon the developer, who shall provide such information as is reasonably requested by the City, and the initial determination shall be made by the Director of Planning and Community Environment. The procedures for the determination shall generally be those described in Chapter 18.90 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, including the right of appeal to the City Council under Chapter 18.93, or such other procedures as may be adopted in a future BMR ordinance. Notice of the hearing shall be given by publication but need not be sent to nearby property owners. If the City determines that the application of the BMR requirement as applied to the project would constitute a taking of property without just compensation, then the BMR agreement for the project shall be modified, reduced or waived to the extent necessary to prevent such a taking.

For Density Bonuses under Government Code Section 65915 (see Program H-38)

PROGRAM H-37:

Adopt an ordinance codifying and implementing the City's "Below Market Rate" (BMR) Program.

The City has for many years successfully implemented its BMR program through adopted guidelines and case-by-case review and approval. Adoption of an ordinance codifying the Below Market Rate program will provide important information to housing developers and guidance to staff.

PROGRAM H-38:

Adopt a revised density bonus program ordinance that allows the construction of up to three additional market rate units for each BMR unit above that normally required, up to a maximum zoning increase of 50 percent in density. Allow an equivalent increase in square footage (Floor Area Ratio) for projects under this program. The revised density bonus program will meet State standards for the provision of housing units for very low- and lower-income renters, seniors and moderate-income condominium buyers in compliance with Government Code Section 65915, et seq.

Given Palo Alto's limited supply of land suitable for housing, the City must encourage housing opportunities particularly if one-fourth of all additional units would be affordable to low- or moderate-income households.

PROGRAM H-39:

Encourage the use of flexible development standards and creative architectural solutions in the design of projects with a substantial BMR component. The intent of this program is to allow individual projects to develop individual solutions to create an attractive living environment both for the project and adjacent development and to address specific project needs, such as the provision of open space.

PROGRAM H-40:

Consider allowing the development of duplexes in the R-1 Zoning District as the required BMR units for a new single family residential subdivision subject to appropriate development standards. Development standards will be prepared, evaluated, and implemented during the Zoning Ordinance Update.

PROGRAM H-41:

Recognize the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park as providing low- and moderate-income housing opportunities. Any redevelopment of the site must be consistent with the City's Mobile Home Park Conversion Ordinance adopted to preserve the existing units. To the extent feasible, the City will seek appropriate local, state and federal funding to assist in the preservation and maintenance of the existing units in the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park.

POLICY H-14:

Support agencies and organizations that provides shelter, housing, and related services to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

The City will work with nonprofit housing organizations and the local development community to ensure that all affordable housing, including family housing and units for seniors on fixed incomes, remains affordable over time. Palo Alto is committed to providing continued support to local groups that serve the housing needs of lower income households.

PROGRAM H-42:

Promote legislative changes and funding for programs that facilitate and subsidize the acquisition, rehabilitation, and operation of existing rental housing by housing assistance organizations, nonprofit developers, and for-profit developers.

PROGRAM H- 43:

Use existing agency programs such as Senior Home Repair to provide rehabilitation assistance to very low- and low-income households.

PROGRAM H-44:

Support the development and preservation of group homes and supported living facilities for persons with special housing needs by:

- *Assisting local agencies and nonprofit organizations in the construction or rehabilitation of new facilities for this population.*
- *Reviewing existing development regulations and identifying and reducing regulatory obstacles to this type of housing during the timeframe of this Housing Element.*

POLICY H-15:

Pursue funding for the construction or rehabilitation of housing that is affordable to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. Support financing techniques such as land banking, federal and state tax credits, mortgage revenue bonds, and mortgage credit certificates to subsidize the cost of housing.

In the past, the development of affordable housing has relied primarily on federal and state funding sources. While the City should continue to pursue such funds, local funding options should be broadened.

PROGRAM H-45:

Maintain a high priority for the acquisition of new housing sites, acquisition and rehabilitation of existing housing, and housing-related services in the allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds or similar programs.

PROGRAM H-46:

Support and expand the City's Housing Development Fund or successor program.

Palo Alto has established its Housing Development Fund largely from housing mitigation fees from commercial and industrial developers, and residential developers who provide funds in-lieu of BMR units. Other housing-related revenues also have been placed in the fund. With funding becoming more limited, the City should seek to expand opportunities for additional funds.

PROGRAM H-47:

Consider requiring 30% of all revenues generated by the Redevelopment Agency to be used for the provision of affordable housing.

PROGRAM H-48:

Continue to seek funding from all appropriate state and federal programs whenever they are available to support the development or rehabilitation of housing for very low-, low-, or moderate-income households.

PROGRAM H-49:

Continue to support the County of Santa Clara's Mortgage Credit Certificate (MCC) Program to create and support homeownership opportunities for lower- and moderate-income households in Palo Alto.

PROGRAM H-50:

Continue to require developers of employment-generating commercial and industrial developments to contribute to the supply of low- and moderate-income housing.

PROGRAM H-51:

Periodically review the housing nexus formula as required under Chapter 16.47 of the Municipal Code to better reflect the impact of new jobs on housing demand and cost.

Commercial and industrial development continues to generate new jobs, thereby increasing the demand for housing. A significant number of these jobs are or will be filled by low- to moderate-income wage earners, increasing the demand for more affordable units. Developers who contribute to the current jobs/housing imbalance and the accompanying housing shortage should assist the City in solving this problem. This has been partially accomplished by Chapter 16.47 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code, which requires developers of commercial and industrial projects to either provide housing units or pay an in-lieu fee to the Housing Development Fund. Over the last few years the increase in the in-lieu fees have not kept pace with the actual increase in the cost of providing housing in Palo Alto. This undercuts the purpose of the in-lieu fee. Periodically reviewing and updating the housing nexus study and fee formula will ensure that commercial and industrial developments will continue to contribute a consistent amount towards their low- and moderate-income housing demand.

POLICY H-16:

Encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, and construction of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels and SRO housing.

PROGRAM H-52:

Permit Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units in industrial, commercial, and high density residential zoning districts using development standards that would encourage the construction of the maximum number of units consistent with the goals of preserving the character of adjacent neighborhoods.

SROs are hotels or residential structures that provide short-term and transitional housing. They may or may not have kitchens or bathrooms within each individual unit. Palo Alto has three SROs (Barker, Craig, and Palo Alto Hotels) and they are a valuable, necessary part of the housing stock. A fourth SRO with 107 rooms and sponsored by the Palo Alto Housing Corporation opened for occupancy in March of 1998. The City should work with SRO owners to ensure the continued viability of these projects and should support opportunities for new SROs in appropriate locations.

PROGRAM H-53:

Examine the Zoning Code during the current Zoning Ordinance Update (2002-2004) to ensure that the Code facilitates shared housing or other innovative housing types and provides flexible development standards for these types of housing that will allow such housing to be built while preserving the character of the neighborhoods in which they are proposed to be located.

POLICY H-17:

Support opportunities for Shared Housing and other innovative housing forms to promote diversity and meet the needs of different household types and income levels.

Shared housing for seniors and single parent households has been supported through a portion of the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds. Other housing types might include co-housing and limited equity partnerships.

POLICY H-18:

Support housing that incorporates facilities and services to meet the health care, transit, or social service needs of households with special needs, including seniors and persons with disabilities.

PROGRAM H-54:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, develop zoning modifications, which would allow higher densities and create other incentives for projects proposing 100% affordable senior rental housing.

The elderly population of Palo Alto has and will continue to increase substantially. Households containing elderly persons also tend to have limited fixed incomes and to pay proportionally more (overpay) for housing than other segments of the City's population. Creating an incentive to provide more higher density rental housing for seniors will help to increase the supply of housing and to limit future housing cost increases.

PROGRAM H-55:

Examine the Zoning Code during the current Zoning Ordinance Update (2002-2004) to ensure that the Code facilitates the construction of housing that provides services for special needs households and provides flexible development standards for special service housing that will allow such housing to be built while preserving the character of the neighborhoods in which they are proposed to be located.

POLICY H-19:

Support family housing that addresses resident needs for childcare, youth services, recreation opportunities and access to transit.

PROGRAM H-56:

Provide preferential or priority processing for those residential or mixed-use projects that incorporate child care facilities, provide recreational opportunities above normal open space requirements, or that provide enhanced access to public transit.

Meeting the housing needs of seniors may require selecting sites near shopping areas, social activities, medical services, and transit lines. Housing needs for people who are physically disabled must be addressed in the design of all projects. Other groups with special needs include homeless persons, persons with AIDS, people with emotional or mental disabilities, and victims of domestic abuse. Family housing may require locations near schools and parks and provisions for childcare. Amenities for youth, such as transportation and recreation, should be accommodated.

POLICY H-20:

Support legislation, regulatory changes, federal funding, and local efforts for the permanent preservation of HUD-assisted very low- and low-income units at risk of conversion to market rate housing or loss of federal rental assistance.

Palo Alto has 728 units in 13 projects of very low- and low-income housing of which only one project representing 92 units (the Terman Apartments) is at significant risk of being converted to market rate housing. The remaining projects are held by non-profit corporations which are considerably less likely to convert their units to market rate housing. However, given that the future of the HUD Section 8 Program and its ongoing funding continue to be uncertain, the units held by the non-profits may be subject to rent increases if Section 8 subsidies are lost or reduced in the future. Preservation of these units as affordable housing is a key priority and will require coordination and cooperation, as well as imaginative solutions.

POLICY H-21:

Support the provision of emergency shelter, transitional housing and ancillary services to address homelessness.

Emergency shelters located in places of worship or National Guard Armory sites provide immediate, emergency short-term housing. There is also a need for transitional housing with supportive services to bridge the gap between emergency beds and community

reintegration. The types of services that are most helpful are the basic necessities of food, clothing, mail, job training, counseling, case management, payee services, physical and mental health services, vocational training, job placement and permanent, affordable housing.

PROGRAM H-57:

As part of the Zoning Ordinance Update process, modify the Zoning Code to allow homeless shelters in the CS, CD and industrial zoning districts with a Conditional Use Permit.

PROGRAM H-58:

Create emergency homeless shelter and transitional housing location and development criteria during the timeframe of this Housing Element to aid the developers of this type of housing in understanding the standards the City will use to review these types of housing projects and to expedite the processing of Conditional Use Permits and other permits required for these types of housing. Location and development criteria for emergency homeless shelters should be based on the size and operating characteristics of the facility. Transitional housing location and development criteria should use standards comparable to traditional housing of similar size and density since transitional housing has impacts similar to traditional housing although non-traditional assistance services are provided.

POLICY H-22:

Provide leadership in addressing homelessness as a regional issue.

POLICY H-23:

Work closely with appropriate agencies in the region to develop and implement policies and programs relating to homelessness.

PROGRAM H-59:

Continue to participate in the Santa Clara County Homeless Collaborative as well as work with adjacent jurisdictions to develop additional shelter opportunities.

The Homeless Collaborative provides a regional approach to homelessness prevention based on the federal continuum care model.

PROGRAM H-60:

Continue to participate with and support agencies addressing homelessness.

FAIR HOUSING

Goal H-4: An End to Housing Discrimination on the Basis of Race, Religion, National Origin, Age, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Marital Status, Physical Handicap, or Other Barriers that Prevent Choice in Housing.

Palo Alto has a long-standing record of supporting and working towards the elimination of all barriers to housing. Discrimination in any form is not acceptable. The City is committed towards improving access to housing for all of its citizens.

POLICY H-24:

Support programs and agencies that seek to eliminate housing discrimination.

PROGRAM H-61:

Work with appropriate state and federal agencies to ensure that fair housing laws are enforced.

PROGRAM H-62:

Continue to support groups that provide fair housing services, such as Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing.

PROGRAM H-63:

Continue the efforts of the Human Relations Commission to combat discrimination in rental housing, including mediation of problems between landlords and tenants.

PROGRAM H-64:

Continue implementation of the City's Ordinances prohibiting discrimination in renting or leasing housing based on age, parenthood, pregnancy or the potential or actual presence of a minor child.

PROGRAM H-65:

As part of the current (2002-2004) Zoning Code Update process, examine all Zoning Code and other pertinent development regulations affected by the passage of Senate Bill SB520, which is designed to eliminate housing discrimination based on familial status or disability, and modify those provisions that would hamper the implementation of SB520. Develop written procedures describing how Palo Alto will process and treat reasonable accommodation requests for projects proposing housing for special needs households.

PROGRAM H-66:

Continue the City's role in coordinating the actions of various support groups that are seeking to eliminate housing discrimination and in providing funding and other support for these groups to disseminate fair housing information in Palo Alto, including information on referrals to pertinent investigative or enforcement agencies in the case of fair housing complaints.

Palo Alto currently funds and utilizes the services of Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing (MCFH) to disseminate a variety of fair housing information to existing and potential residents. MCFH essentially acts as a "clearinghouse" for this information and makes the most of the limited resources available.

PROGRAM H-67:

Continue to interpret and apply the City's land use regulations in a manner that does not deny to person with disability the access to housing and public accommodations that they are guaranteed under state and federal law.

The Fair Housing Act Amendment of 1988 require that local governments make reasonable accommodations in their rules, policies, practices and service when necessary to afford persons with disabilities equal opportunity for access to housing. The Americans with Disabilities Act establishes other rights with respect to commercial enterprises and other public accommodations.

ENERGY CONSERVATION AND COST REDUCTION

Goal H-5: Reduced Housing Expenses for Energy

POLICY H-25:

Reduce the cost of housing by continuing to promote energy efficiency, resource management, and conservation for new and existing housing.

By owning and operating its own utility system, Palo Alto can offer its residents high quality service at the lowest possible cost. The City has invested in a mix of new energy and water supply projects, provided consumer-oriented conservation and solar services and programs, and promoted operating efficiencies that allow residents to meet their resource needs at a lower cost than in most cities in the region.

PROGRAM H-68:

Continue providing staff support and technical assistance in energy conservation and demand management to architects, developers, and utility customers.

PROGRAM H-69:

Review State programs encouraging energy efficiency and incorporate appropriate programs in Palo Alto's energy conservation programs and outreach efforts.

PROGRAM H-70:

Continue to develop a proactive public outreach program to encourage Palo Alto residents to conserve energy and to share ideas regarding energy conservation.

PROGRAM H-71:

Encourage developers and builders to construct sustainable residential buildings that increase energy efficiency by at least 15% above the energy standards of Title 24.

POLICY H-26:

Reduce the cost of housing using the Utilities Residential Rate Assistance Program (RAP).

PROGRAM H-72:

Continue to assist very low-income households in reducing their utility bills through the RAP.

The Utilities Residential Rate Assistance Program (RAP) was adopted by the City Council in 1993 to provide rate relief to residents who lack adequate financial resources to pay utility bills. Level of income and disability are used to determine if a household qualifies for the program. Qualifying residents currently receive a 20% discount on their utility bills. In May 2001 the City Council expanded the reach of the RAP to allow three times more residents to qualify for the program than were allowed the year before.

Implementation

Quantified Five-Year Objectives

Palo Alto has, or plans to have, sufficient land to accommodate its fair share of the region's housing needs. However, given the significant costs involved with the production of affordable housing, it is not clear that Palo Alto will be able to build all the very low-, low-, and moderate-income housing needed. Such housing cannot be built without substantial subsidies, which are not readily available to Palo Alto due primarily to the limited amount of federal and state subsidies set aside for the production of affordable housing and the extensive competition for these limited funds, such as the HOME Program, which use selection criteria that place communities like Palo Alto at a competitive disadvantage. Although Palo Alto does have a BMR Program, the number of low- and moderate-income units this program is expected to generate will not meet all of the City's affordable housing needs. The City must, therefore, use its limited resources wisely to encourage the production of the maximum number of affordable housing units possible and to preserve as many existing affordable housing units as possible. The following table summarizes the City's quantified objectives for the next five years (2001-2006).

Quantified Affordable Housing Objectives 2001-2006

	Very Low Income	Low Income	Moderate Income	Total
New Construction				
Rental	25	50	50	125
Owner	0	0	60	60
Total	**25**	**50**	**110**	**185**
Existing Units				
Preservation				
Rental (Terman Apts.)	24	48	20	92
Owner	0	0	0	0
Total	**24**	**48**	**0**	**92**
Rehabilitation				
Rental	13 beds	0	0	13 beds
Owner	0	0	0	0
Total	**13 beds**	**0**	**0**	**13 beds**

Over the next five years, Palo Alto intends to produce 125 units of affordable rental housing with the highest priority being the provision of rental housing for families with children as called for in the City's 2000-2005 ***Consolidated Plan***. Single Room Occupancy (SRO) and transitional or other permanent rental housing are secondary priorities. Besides families with children, the City intends to assist the homeless and those at-risk of becoming homeless, persons with special needs (especially the mentally ill), and elderly persons. The City will work with non-profit organizations to meet the goals listed above, particularly in the preservation of the Terman Apartments. Only by combining resources with these organizations can the City have a reasonable expectation of achieving these goals.

Implementation Schedule

Palo Alto intends to have all of its new housing programs operational prior to 2004 to ensure that the City have sufficient time to create the necessary housing opportunities and to enable the development community to build the housing units needed to accommodate the City's fair share of the regional housing need within the timeframe of the Housing Element. Programs H-1 through H-5, which deal with residential densities and development standards, will be implemented through the Zoning Ordinance Update currently underway in Palo Alto. Draft ordinance revisions are expected by October 2002.

Programs to encourage more mixed use development, such as H-5 and H-16, will also be considered in the Zoning Ordinance Update.

Other programs that will be implemented through the Zoning Ordinance Update include:

Program H-20 – modify Zoning Ordinance to discourage the use of residential lands for non-residential purposes.
Program H-26 – create development regulations to encourage rehabilitation of historic residential buildings, older multiple family buildings and smaller single-family residences.
Program H-34 through H-38 – modify Zoning Ordinance to increase the number of BMR units required, revised density bonus program, and revised development standards to encourage the production of BMR units.
Program H-52 – identify and remove obstacles to the production of shared housing or other innovative housing types.
Program H-53 through H-55 – develop zoning modifications to allow higher densities and other incentives for 100% senior rental housing. Remove obstacles and provide incentives for special needs housing and housing providing special services.
Program H-56 – allow homeless shelters in more commercial and industrial districts.
Program H-64 – review Zoning Code and pertinent development regulations and revise to ensure compliance with Senate Bill SB520 regarding housing discrimination.

The Housing Opportunities Study described in Programs H-13 and H-14 is an ongoing program to seek new housing opportunities. The Housing Sites Inventory will be updated as new land is identified or as the circumstances or condition of each site on the inventory change. Individual sites identified in the first tier of the Housing Site Inventory should be rezoned for residential or mixed use development before 2004.

Other ongoing programs include:

Program H-17 – use coordinated plans to promote housing over commercial uses.
Program H-21 – determine which affordable housing projects qualify for fee waivers.
Program H-22 – exempt affordable housing projects from any infrastructure impact fees.
Program H-23 – require all City Departments to expedite the processing of affordable housing projects that propose more than the minimum level of BMR units.
Program H-24 – establish an annual housing progress-monitoring program.
Program H-25 – continue citywide property maintenance, inspection and enforcement program.
Programs H-27 and H-28 – continue implementation of Condominium Conversion Ordinance.
Programs H-30 and H-31 – continue community clean up programs.
Program H-33 – provide preferential or priority processing for residential or mixed use projects that provide more than the minimum required BMR housing.
Program H-34 – implementation of the City's Consolidated Plan or successor documents.
Program H-40 – encourage the preservation of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park.
Programs H-41 through H-43 – continue to support the agencies and organizations that provide shelter and other services to very low- to moderate-income households.
Programs H-44 through H-48 – continue to pursue funding for affordable housing.

Programs H-58 and H-59 – continue to work with other agencies on the problem of homelessness.
Programs H-60 through H-63 and H-65 – continue to support agencies and programs that seek to eliminate housing discrimination.
Programs H-66 through H-69 – continue to encourage energy conservation in new and existing housing.
Program H-70 – continue to assist very low-income households in reducing their energy bills.

Some programs and policies will require changes to other portions of the Municipal Code or other regulations. These programs and policies should be implemented by 2004 or during the timeframe of this Housing Element. These policies and programs include:

Program H-46 – consider use of 30% of Redevelopment Agency funds for the production of affordable housing.
Programs H-49 and H-50 – revise Chapter 16.47 of the Municipal Code to require housing contributions from employment generating development that reflect their impact on housing demand and cost and that keep pace with housing cost increases.
Program H-57 - create homeless shelter location and development criteria.

The Department of Planning and Community Environment will take the lead in implementing nearly all of the City's housing programs or team up with other City Departments in their implementation with a few exceptions. Programs for which Planning is solely responsible include H-18, H-24, H-25, H-27, H-28, H-32 through H-35, H-40 through H-44, H-47, H-48 and H-49. Planning will coordinate with the City Attorney's Office on Programs H-1 through H-17, H-19, H-20, H-22, H-23 (with the City Manager's Office), H-26, H-29, H-36 through H-40, H-45, H-50 through H-57, H-60, and H-64 (with Community Services). Planning will coordinate with the Community Services Department on Programs H-58, H-61 and H-65. The Planning and Utilities Departments are jointly responsible for Programs H-67 through H-69.

Some housing programs are the sole responsibility of other individual City Departments or combinations of Departments. The City Attorney's Office is responsible for Program H-21 and for Program H-63 in conjunction with the Community Services Department. The Community Services Department is responsible for implementing Programs H-59 and H-62 and jointly responsible for Program H-31 with the Department of Public Works. The City Manger's Office is responsible for Programs H-30 and H-46 and the Utilities Department for Programs H-66 and H-70.

More information on the implementation of these housing programs can be found in the Implementation Appendix of Palo Alto's ***1998-2010 Comprehensive Plan***.

5 Natural Environment

Vision Statement

Palo Alto will meet today's needs without compromising the needs of future generations. Palo Alto will respect and manage natural resources in a way that sustains the natural environment and protects our foothills, baylands, creeks, parks, wildlife and open space legacy. Elements of the natural environment will be conserved where they remain intact and restored where they have been degraded by past development. A substantial portion of the City will remain as open space. Even in built-up areas, a network of parks will provide access to nature and an urban forest will provide ecological benefits and a source of beauty for residents. Palo Alto will strive for cleaner air and cleaner water. Its policies and programs will foster energy and water conservation, reduced solid waste generation, and cleanup of contaminated sites. The City will be well prepared for natural disasters and will grow and change in a way that minimizes public exposure to hazards like fire, flood, and earthquake.

Introduction

The Natural Environment Element addresses the management of open land and natural resources in Palo Alto and the protection of life and property from natural hazards. It is one of the broadest elements of the Comprehensive Plan, encompassing four of the seven elements mandated by the State. The Element satisfies the State requirement for an Open Space Element by including policies describing the use of open space for the preservation of natural resources, the managed production of natural resources, outdoor recreation, and public health and safety. It satisfies the State requirement for a Conservation Element by including policies pertaining to creeks and riparian areas, wetlands, the urban forest, water resources, wildlife, air quality, hazardous materials, solid waste disposal, and energy. It satisfies the State requirement for a Safety Element through policies describing how exposure to natural hazards like earthquakes and fires will be reduced. Finally, it satisfies the Noise Element requirement through policies that reduce exposure to undesirable levels of noise in the community.

The remainder of the Element consists of goals, policies, and programs. The text is organized into ten topics, each with a corresponding goal. Background information on each topic is included following the goal statements. It should be noted that the Natural Environment Element does not include policies relating to mineral resources because Palo Alto does not contain any mineral deposits of regional significance.

Open Space

See Maps C-1 and C-2 for locations of parks and open space preserves

See also Policies L-1, L-2 and L-3

See Map L-9 for Williamson Act Properties

Goal N-1: A Citywide Open Space System that Protects and Conserves Palo Alto's Natural Resources and Provides a Source of Beauty and Enjoyment for Palo Alto Residents.

Over one-third of Palo Alto's land area consists of open space preserves. These preserves are primarily located in the southern foothills but also extend along the Bay on the northeastern edge of the City. Major foothill area open spaces include the 1,400-acre Foothill Park, 2,200 acres of Montebello Open Space Preserve, the 610-acre Arastradero Preserve, and 200 acres of Los Trancos Open Space Preserve. Foothill and Arastradero Parks are owned and operated by the City, while Montebello and Los Trancos are operated by the Mid-Peninsula Open Space District. These large open spaces provide opportunities for hiking, biking, fishing, picnicking, camping, nature study, and non-motorized boating. They also have significant ecological and aesthetic value, providing important habitat for wildlife and a scenic backdrop to the urban area.

Open space preservation in the foothills continues to be a key element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Other open spaces in the foothills are owned by Stanford University, the Palo Alto Hills Golf and Country Club, and numerous private landowners. Approximately 477 acres of the City's privately owned open space is restricted by the Williamson Act, a State program that creates tax incentives for keeping property in agricultural or open space use. The Williamson Act properties include cattle grazing lands, orchards, and a Christmas tree farm. Approximately 149 acres are considered to be prime farmland.

Along the San Francisco Bay shoreline, open space is contained in what is generally called the Palo Alto baylands. This multi-use area of about 2,100 acres includes the John Fletcher Byxbee Recreation Area, the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course, the Baylands Athletic Center, the Palo Alto Landfill (part of which has been closed and converted into Byxbee Park), a flood control basin, and several natural salt marshes. The area contains a number of low impact recreational facilities, including hiking and bicycling trails and a boardwalk. It also includes the Lucy Evans Baylands Nature Interpretive Center, a small picnic area, and a sailing station open to windsurfers, kayakers, and small sailboats. Most of the area consists of passive open space, including a duck pond and bird sanctuary, restored salt marshes, the Emily Renzel Freshwater Marsh, and some of the most extensive salt marsh and mudflat habitats remaining in the Bay Area.

Open space in Palo Alto also includes 29 neighborhood and district parks totalling approximately 190 acres. The location of these parks, along with policies guiding their use and management, are contained in the Community Services and Facilities Element.

Palo Alto's foothills and baylands will continue to be conserved as open space over the term of this Plan. The City will seek out new opportunities for permanent open space in both areas. In addition, the City will endeavor to link some of its existing open spaces, particularly through connections between Skyline Ridge and San Francisco Bay. Such linkages can improve access to regional open space for Palo Alto residents, provide more open space in urban areas, and create ecological benefits for wildlife. The policies and programs below address how the City will maintain and improve its open space resources.

See also Policies T-15 and T-17 and Programs T-18, T-25 and T-26 regarding bike trails and bay to skyline trail

POLICY N-1:

Manage existing public open space areas and encourage the management of private open space areas in a manner that meets habitat protection goals, public safety concerns, and low impact recreation needs.

Part of the City's commitment to maintaining the foothills and baylands as open space is a commitment to environmentally sound management and maintenance practices. Ecological values must be protected to realize the full aesthetic, recreational, safety, and educational benefits of open space.

PROGRAM N-1:

Review and update as needed the Open Space (OS) zoning district regulations to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan policies.

PROGRAM N-2:

Examine and improve management practices for natural habitat and open space areas, including the provision of access to open space for City vehicles and equipment, to ensure that natural resources are protected.

PROGRAM N-3:

Review the need for access controls in environmentally sensitive areas, including the baylands, foothills, and riparian corridors.

While the City recognizes the need to provide adequate access to open space for fire protection and utility maintenance, it should not be provided at the expense of natural resources. All access should be designed to minimize disturbance of vegetation, topography, habitat, and other valued features of the natural landscape. In addition, the City should capitalize on opportunities to use improvements like access roads and fire trails for multiple purposes, such as hiking, biking, and equestrian trails. This can further reduce the amount of disturbance within natural areas as well as the costs of trail construction and maintenance.

POLICY N-2:

Support regional and sub-regional efforts to acquire, develop, operate, and maintain an open space system extending from Skyline Ridge to San Francisco Bay.

See also Policies T-14 through T-23 on pedestrian and bicycle circulation

Future open space acquisitions should focus on properties with the potential to link existing open space areas together. Particularly important are linkages that contribute to open space connections between Skyline Ridge and San Francisco Bay. Creek corridors provide a logical route for such connections, but there are other linear features (for instance, utility rights-of-way) that may also be appropriate.

PROGRAM N-4:

Seek additional sources of funding, including state and federal programs, to finance open space acquisition and development.

POLICY N-3:

Protect sensitive plant species resources from the impacts of development.

POLICY N-4:

Preserve the foothill area as predominantly open space.

This policy applies to public land, Stanford University land, and private land in the foothill area.

See also Policies L-1and L-44 regarding Stanford Research Park and Land Use

Sensitive Plant Species

Twenty four species of rare, threatened, or endangered plants have the potential to occur in the Palo Alto Planning Area. One species, Pt. Reyes Bird's Beak, is known to occur in the baylands as shown on Map N-1. The potential locations for these species are primarily within the grassland and chaparral habitats in the foothills, and in the marsh habitat in the baylands. A complete listing of the species is provided below.

- Santa Clara Thorn Mint
- Balsamroot
- Oakland Star-Tulip
- Chaparral Harebell
- Brewer's Clarkia
- Santa Clara Red Ribbons
- Pt. Reyes Bird's Beak
- Clustered Lady's Slipper
- Hospital Canyon Larkspur
- Western Leatherwood
- Tiburon Buckwheat
- Fragrant Fritillary
- Marsh Gumplant
- Marin Dwarf Flax
- Contra Costa Goldfields
- Delta Tule Pea
- Arcuate Bush Mallow
- Hall's Bush Mallow
- Dudley's Lousewort
- Gairdner's Yampah
- Hairless Popcornflower
- Lobb's Aquatic Buttercup
- California Sea Blite
- Caper-Fruited Tropidocarpum

PROGRAM N-5:

Work to maintain Williamson Act agricultural preserves within the City.

POLICY N-5:

Preserve Stanford's lower foothill property predominantly within the City, and act as an advocate to Santa Clara County for the preservation of the open space link between the urban area and the foothills.

See also Policy L-2, Programs L-1 and L-2, and associated text in the Land Use and Community Design Element

Stanford's lower foothill property is located between the developed part of the campus and the large areas of mostly public open space northeast of Highway 280. The property provides a visual separation between the City and the hills, and is important for its wildlife habitat value.

POLICY N-6:

Through implementation of the Site and Design process and the Open Space zone district regulations, minimize impacts of any new development on views of the hillsides, on the open space character, and the natural ecology of the hillsides.

PROGRAM N-6:

As part of the design review process for proposed development in the Open Space zone district that exceeds 6,500 square feet, require that "story poles" be erected with outlining tape depicting the building's location, bulk and height to aid in assessing the potential visual impacts of the proposed project.

POLICY N-7:

All development in the foothill portion of the Planning Area (i.e., above Junipero Serra Boulevard) should be consistent with the following criteria:

City of Palo Alto Open Space Development Criteria

1. The development should not be visually intrusive from public roadways and public parklands. As much as possible, development should be sited so it is hidden from view.
2. Development should be located away from hilltops and designed to not extend above the nearest ridge line.
3. Site and structure design should take into consideration impacts on privacy and views of neighboring properties.
4. Development should be clustered, or closely grouped, in relation to the area surrounding it to make it less conspicuous, minimize access roads, and reduce fragmentation of natural habitats.
5. Built forms and landscape forms should mimic the natural topography. Building lines should follow the lines of the terrain, and trees and bushes should appear natural from a distance.
6. Existing trees with a circumference of 37.5 inches, measured 4.5 feet above the ground level, should be preserved and integrated into the site design. Existing vegetation should be retained as much as possible.
7. Cut is encouraged when it is necessary for geotechnical stability and to enable the development to blend into the natural topography. Fill is generally discouraged and should never be distributed within the driplines of existing trees. Locate development to minimize the need for grading.
8. To reduce the need for cut and fill and to reduce potential runoff, large, flat expanses of impervious surfaces should be avoided.
9. Buildings should use natural materials and earthtone or subdued colors.
10. Landscaping should be native species that require little or no irrigation. Immediately adjacent to structures, fire retardant plants should be used as a fire prevention technique.
11. Exterior lighting should be low-intensity and shielded from view so it is not directly visible from off-site.
12. Access roads should be of a rural rather than urban character. (Standard curb, gutter, and concrete sidewalk are usually inconsistent with the foothills environment.)
13. For development in unincorporated areas, ground coverage should be in general conformance with Palo Alto's Open Space District regulations.

See also Policy T-53 relating to the location of a southern connection to the Dumbarton Bridge

POLICY N-8:

Preserve and protect the Bay, marshlands, salt ponds, sloughs, creeks, and other natural water or wetland areas as open space.

The 1987 Baylands Master Plan identified the baylands as a special resource warranting conservation and preservation as open space. The baylands represent one of Palo Alto's most productive ecosystems. They present opportunities for wetlands restoration and a variety of active and passive recreational activities. They also serve an important flood control function that should continue to be protected in the future.

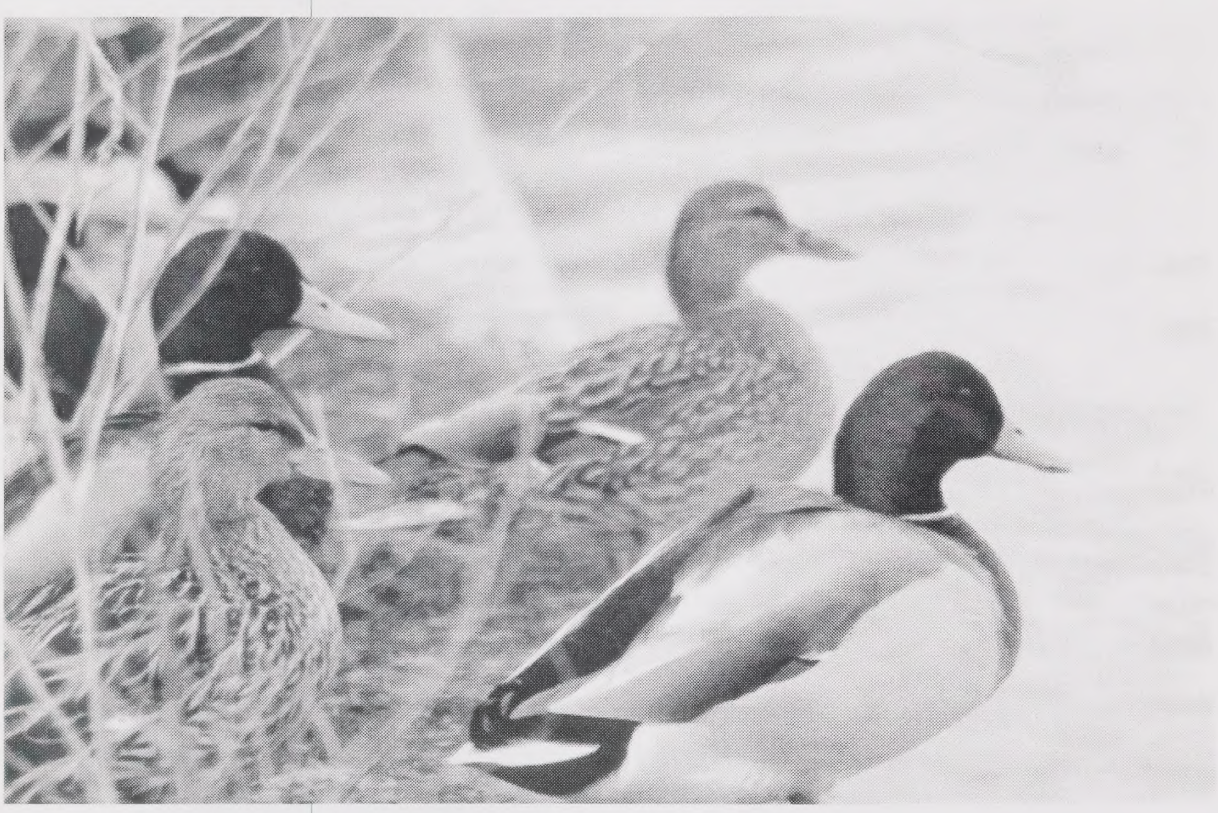


Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

The baylands provide outstanding scenery and exceptionally rich habitat for wildlife. Their conservation continues to be a priority.

CREEKS AND RIPARIAN AREAS

GOAL N-2: Conservation of Creeks and Riparian Areas as Open Space Amenities, Natural Habitat Areas, and Elements of Community Design.

See Map N-1 for the general locations of sensitive species and their habitats

Creeks are among Palo Alto's most important natural resources. Adobe, Barron, Matadero, and San Francisquito Creeks support a wide variety of plant and animal life and are a defining element for several of the City's neighborhoods. Riparian corridors along the creeks, sometimes several hundred feet wide, provide migratory paths for wildlife, visual relief from the urban environment, and opportunities for hiking and biking trails. The creeks provide a unique opportunity to incorporate natural features into the design of the City.

The policies and programs below address the City's desire to conserve pristine riparian corridors; re-establish corridors that have been diminished by flood control culverts, concrete channels, and other disturbances; and prevent further degradation of the creek environment. Much of the emphasis is placed on maintaining appropriate setbacks from creeks and re-establishing natural vegetative and hydrologic features within creek corridors. The policies also emphasize

the importance of balancing creek conservation with public safety needs, particularly flood control. Related policies and programs in the Land Use and Community Design Element describe the importance of creeks as a character-defining element of the City and some of its neighborhoods.

See also Policy L-68 and Program L-41

Special Status Wildlife Species

Palo Alto's open space areas provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife, including mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and insects. A listing and description of local wildlife may be found in the Comprehensive Plan Environmental Impact Report. A number of the species found in the Palo Alto area are either in danger of extinction or are present in very limited numbers. These "special status species" have been identified by the federal and state governments as requiring protection and conservation.

Species of special concern that are known to occur in the Palo Alto area are listed below and their habitats are shown on Map N-1.

Species Known to Occur in Palo Alto

- American Kestrel
- Bay Checkerspot Butterfly
- California Clapper Rail
- California Red-legged Frog
- California Tiger Salamander
- Great Horned Owl
- Northern Harrier
- Northwestern Pond Turtle
- Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse
- Sharp-shinned Hawk
- Steelhead Trout
- Yellow Warbler

Other special status marshland birds that may be present are:

- Black-crowned Night Heron
- California Black Rail
- Salt Marsh Common Yellowthroat
- Salt Marsh Song Sparrow
- Western Snowy Plover

POLICY N-9:

Avoid fencing, piping, and channelization of creeks when flood control and public safety can be achieved through measures that preserve the natural environment and habitat of the creek.

POLICY N-10:

Work with the Santa Clara Valley Water District and other relevant regional agencies to enhance riparian corridors and provide adequate flood control by use of low impact restoration strategies.

POLICY N-11:

Preserve the integrity of riparian corridors.

Preservation of riparian corridors requires maintenance of adequate corridor width, linear continuity, and a diverse palette of riparian plant species. Obviously, a riparian corridor will be adversely affected if large amounts of vegetation in the corridor are removed. However, activity outside the corridor can also affect its health, particularly where runoff patterns are altered, water quality is degraded, and wildlife is disturbed. Creek setbacks are proposed to minimize damage to riparian areas, while grading and sedimentation controls are used to reduce impacts from development outside the corridors.

Photo courtesy of Palo Alto Weekly—taken by Joe Melena.

Involvement and participation in local issues is one of Palo Alto's hallmarks. Here Bay Area Action members clean up San Francisquito Creek.

PROGRAM N-7:

Adopt a setback along natural creeks that prohibits the siting of buildings and other structures, impervious surfaces, outdoor activity areas, and ornamental landscaped areas within 100 feet of the top of a creek bank. Allow passive or intermittent outdoor activities and pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle pathways where there are adequate setbacks to protect the natural riparian environment. Within the setback area, provide a border of native riparian vegetation at least 25 feet along the creek bank.

Exceptions to the 100-foot setback are as follows:

- ***Single family property is exempt from the 100-foot setback, except that undeveloped parcels southwest of Highway 280 are not exempt. A creek ordinance and guidelines will be prepared addressing appropriate setbacks and creek conservation measures.***
- ***Existing development within the 100-foot setback will be considered legal and nonconforming. With the 100-foot setback as a goal where feasible, redevelopment of such sites must be designed consistent with basic creek habitat objectives and make a significant net improvement in the condition of the creek.***

PROGRAM N-8:

Develop and adopt a creek ordinance that establishes new development regulations for properties abutting creeks, establishes an exception process, and provides incentives to achieve maximum creek setbacks, such as reduced front yard setbacks and reduced on-site parking requirements.

PROGRAM N-9:

Participate in a San Francisquito Creek Coordinated Resource Management and Planning (CRMP) process with adjacent cities.

The CRMP organization is a coalition of local government staff, resource agency staff, and representatives from various community, business, and interest groups, administered by the Peninsula Conservation Center. In 1996, the organization began addressing the natural resource, flood and erosion control, water pollution, land use planning, social issues, and public education issues relating to the San Francisquito Creek watershed.

POLICY N-12:

Preserve the habitat value of creek corridors through the preservation of native plants and the replacement of invasive, non-native plants with native plants.

Any vegetation along creek banks that is removed should be replaced with native species. This not only prevents erosion and stabilizes creek banks, it also improves wildlife habitat.

PROGRAM N-10:

Work with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to establish guidelines for creek channel maintenance that encourage preservation of riparian habitat, including vegetation that provides shade to creek bottoms.

Plants that naturally occur along streams form the foundation of the riparian ecosystem. In addition to providing food and shelter, one of the values of riparian vegetation is that it shades water in the creeks and thus lowers water temperature. The cooler water is important in sustaining aquatic life.

PROGRAM N-11:

Work with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to develop a comprehensive riparian corridor restoration and enhancement program that identifies specific stretches of corridor to be restored, standards to be achieved, and sources of funding. Include provisions for tree planting to enhance natural habitat.

POLICY N-13:

Discourage creek bank instability, erosion, downstream sedimentation, and flooding by minimizing site disturbance and vegetation removal on or near creeks and carefully reviewing grading and drainage plans for development near creeks and elsewhere in the watersheds of creeks.

The City supports erosion prevention and flood control solutions that incorporate plants and re-establish a natural creek environment. There are a number of biologically-sensitive approaches that use vegetation to stabilize creek banks and reduce sedimentation. These incorporate live plant material (such as trees, shrubs, and herbaceous ground cover) along with soil, rocks, boulders, timbers, consolidated brush, and geotextile fabric to provide structural support for the creek bank.

PROGRAM N-12:

Review and update the Grading Ordinance to ensure that it adequately protects creeks from the erosion and sedimentation impacts of grading.

PROGRAM N-13:

Establish public education programs regarding the conservation of creeks and riparian areas.

URBAN FOREST

GOAL N-3: A Thriving "Urban Forest" That Provides Ecological, Economic, and Aesthetic Benefits for Palo Alto.

The "urban forest" is comprised of the street tree system, trees on parks and other public lands, and trees on private properties and in yards throughout the City. It functions as an extension of the woodland and grassland plant communities in the foothills and provides a "bridge" for wildlife between the foothills and the Bay. The urban forest is most established in the older

parts of the City, where mature street trees provide a dense canopy. In addition to its biological benefits, the investment in Palo Alto's urban forest has provided a significant return by creating appealing streets and resulting higher property values. There are more than 300 different species of trees on Palo Alto's streets. However, a limited number of species make up almost 50 percent of the total trees planted. These are Southern Magnolia, American Sweetgum, London Plane, Modesto Ash, Camphor, Chinese Elm, and Holly Oak. The urban forest does not include trees contained in Palo Alto's open space lands (including Foothills Park and the Arastradero Preserve). Such areas are preserved or managed as natural environments.

Good maintenance practices within the urban forest increases its ecological and aesthetic value.

POLICY N-14:

Protect, revitalize, and expand Palo Alto's urban forest through public education, sensitive regulation, and a long-term financial commitment that is adequate to protect this resource.

Palo Alto's urban forest has historically been a source of civic pride and one of the design elements that set the City apart from some of its neighbors. More recently, however, maintenance and expansion of the street tree system has lagged behind. In some cases, tree cover has actually declined as aging trees have been removed without being replaced. The City is committed to preserving its existing trees, replacing trees that are damaged or dying, and expanding the urban forest in newer parts of town. Proper care of the urban forest requires programs that prevent inappropriate pruning and maintenance practices, provide sufficient irrigation and growing conditions, and minimize interference with structures and overhead utilities.

PROGRAM N-14:

Implement the recommendations of the Tree Task Force.

The Tree Task Force was established in 1993 by the City Council to study Palo Alto's urban forest. In late 1995, the Task Force completed its work and presented final findings to the City Council. The Council adopted most of the Task Force recommendations which included:

- Adoption of a five-year cycle for tree trimming and related funding and staffing requirements.
- Planting of 1,200 trees annually for the next 10 years. Two-thirds of these trees will replace existing specimens and one-third will be newly planted in areas without existing trees.
- Creation of a non-profit tree group to maintain the increased number of trees and provide additional tree services. (The group *Canopy: Trees for Palo Alto* was established in 1996.)
- Development of a Tree Protection Ordinance including administrative and enforcement mechanisms and related funding and staffing requirements. (The Tree Protection Ordinance was adopted in July 1996, a full-time Planning Arborist position established, and a proactive Tree Protection Program implemented.)
- Provision of funding for a proportionate share of the new non-profit tree group's budget from electric utility revenues for use in electric distribution areas.

PROGRAM N-15:

Continue celebration of Arbor Day in Palo Alto.

PROGRAM N-16:

Continue to require replacement of trees, including street trees lost to new development, and establish a program to have replacement trees planted offsite when it is impractical to locate them onsite.

PROGRAM N-17:

Develop and implement a plan for maintenance, irrigation, and replacement of trees in parks, parking lots, and City rights-of-way.

This plan should include guidelines to reduce the impact of large vehicles on street trees, including the tearing of branches by trucks. It should also suggest alternatives to the practice of routinely trimming trees to accommodate 14-foot clearances. The plan should include guidelines developed and implemented by the Utilities Department that protect trees from utility maintenance and installation. It should establish a five-year tree trimming cycle and address the staffing, standards, and funding necessary to carry out such a cycle.

PROGRAM N-18:

Actively pursue funding for tree planting.

PROGRAM N-19:

Establish one or more tree planting programs that seek to achieve the following objectives:

- ***a 50 percent tree canopy for streets, parks, and parking lots; and***
- ***the annual tree planting goals recommended by the Tree Task Force and adopted by the City Council.***

POLICY N-15:

Require new commercial, multi-unit, and single family housing projects to provide street trees and related irrigation systems.

See also Policy L-70

POLICY N-16:

Provide on-going education for City staff, homeowners, and developers regarding landscaping and irrigation practices that protect the urban forest.

Residents and property owners with City street trees in front of or adjacent to their yards are encouraged to care for and water these trees but may not prune or remove them without prior approval by the City arborist, who will provide guidance and specifications for the replacement of trees approved for removal. Some of the City's street trees have been lost or damaged due to disturbance by residents and competition with public infrastructure and sidewalks. This trend will be reversed in the future so that the traditional character of Palo Alto's streets and neighborhoods is retained.

PROGRAM N-20:

Establish procedures to coordinate City review, particularly by the Planning, Utilities, and Public Works Departments, of projects that might impact the urban forest.

PROGRAM N-21:

Work cooperatively with the Palo Alto Unified School District so that their tree planting and maintenance practices are consistent with City guidelines.

POLICY N-17:

Preserve and protect heritage trees, including native oaks and other significant trees, on public and private property.

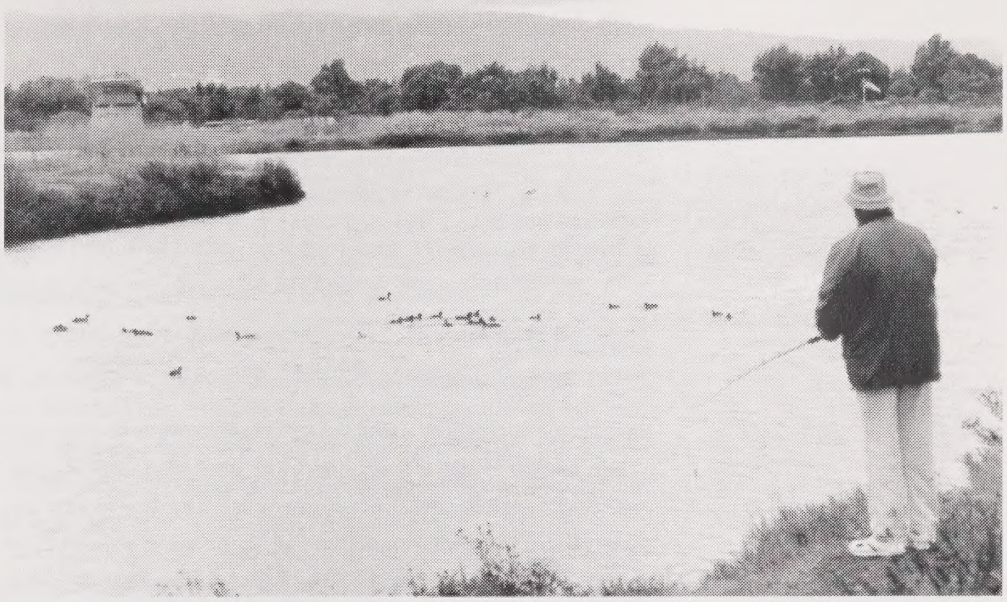
WATER RESOURCES

GOAL N-4: Water Resources that are Prudently Managed to Sustain Plant and Animal Life, Support Urban Activities, and Protect Public Health and Safety.

Conservation of water resources encompasses a broad range of issues, ranging from water supply and water quality to the protection of groundwater and surface water features like San Francisco Bay. Policies and programs are needed to ensure that a healthful, reliable supply of water remains available in the future.

Palo Alto's drinking water is provided by the City Utilities Department through purchases from the San Francisco Water Department's Hetch Hetchy system. In 1996, the City used an average of approximately 13 million gallons per day (mgd). The City has a guaranteed allocation of over 17 mgd through the year 2006. As indicated in the City of Palo Alto Urban Water Management Plan prepared in 1996, the projected water demand in the City through the year 2007 is not expected to exceed 13.7 mgd. The City also owns five groundwater wells, three of which are operational. The wells are available for emergency use should the Hetch Hetchy system be unable to meet the City's needs during a drought or emergency period.

Groundwater in the Palo Alto area is contained in both shallow and deep aquifers formed in the alluvial deposits of streams running from the foothills to the Bay. Until the 1960s, groundwater pressure levels were declining in the Santa Clara Valley. The declining pressure led to salt water intrusion in the shallow aquifers along the Bay and to land subsidence, or localized sinking of the ground. Levees were constructed along the bayfront to keep the Bay waters from flooding the subsided lands. In the 1960s to 1990s, the trend has been reversed as alternative sources of water have been secured for irrigation and other purposes. Saltwater intrusion is thought to be in check and groundwater is now artificially recharged rather than withdrawn in many areas.



Palo Alto's wetlands are important scenic, recreational and wildlife habitat resources.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Groundwater recharge mostly occurs naturally through rainfall. Some areas have higher recharge rates than others, depending on factors like soil porosity, clay content, and depth to bedrock. In the Santa Clara Valley, the areas with the highest recharge rates tend to be along the creeks and on the western edge of the valley floor, just below the toe of the foothills. In Palo Alto, this corresponds to a narrow band of land generally below the Foothill Expressway and above El Camino Real. Between this area and the Bay, there are layers of fine clay that may contain confined pockets of pressurized groundwater.

See Map N-2 showing high groundwater recharge areas

Surface water bodies in and around Palo Alto include lakes, creeks, and San Francisco Bay. Lakes include Felt and Searsville Lakes and Lagunita Reservoir on Stanford land, Boronda Lake in Foothills Park, and Arastradero Lake in the Arastradero Preserve. There are four major creeks—San Francisquito, Matadero. Barron, and Adobe—running from the foothills to the San Francisco Bay estuary system. Tributary creeks in Palo Alto include Arastradero, Deer, Los Trancos, and Permanente. In addition to the natural drainage system, a network of storm drains collects runoff from City streets and carries it to the creeks and San Francisco Bay. The storm water collection system includes over 104 miles of pipe. Some sections of the system are inadequately sized to handle runoff during heavy rains, causing localized street flooding.

For many pollutants, the primary contributor to water pollution in Palo Alto is urban runoff. Runoff from streets, parking lots, commercial businesses, and private yards may contain oil, grease, pesticides and herbicides, heavy metals, paints and household chemicals, construction materials, sediment and eroded soil. Automobiles are a major source of many of these pollutants. Ultimately, these materials end up in creeks and in San Francisco Bay, where they have caused substantial water quality degradation over the past century. As in the rest of the Bay Area, a number of programs are in effect or will be initiated in the near future to reduce pollution from this source.

POLICY N-18:

Protect Palo Alto's groundwater from the adverse impacts of urban uses.

The quality and quantity of Palo Alto's groundwater is a concern because it serves as a backup supply in the event that Hetch Hetchy supplies become unavailable or are insufficient. Protection of the groundwater supply requires some recharge areas to be conserved as open space

rather than covering them all with impervious surfaces like buildings, streets and parking lots. It also means protecting these areas from contaminants from underground storage tanks and inadequate chemical management practices.

PROGRAM N-22:

Work with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to identify and map key groundwater recharge areas for use in land use planning and permitting and the protection of groundwater resources.

While the groundwater recharge area within Palo Alto is largely developed, it can be protected from contamination and further increases in impervious surface.

POLICY N-19:

Secure a reliable, long-term supply of water for Palo Alto.

Securing a long-term water supply is imperative to meet basic health and safety requirements. When maintaining infrastructure and considering new projects, it is imperative to consider the cost and environmental consequences. New reservoirs, aqueducts, and treatment plants are more costly than wastewater recycling or water conservation.

PROGRAM N-23:

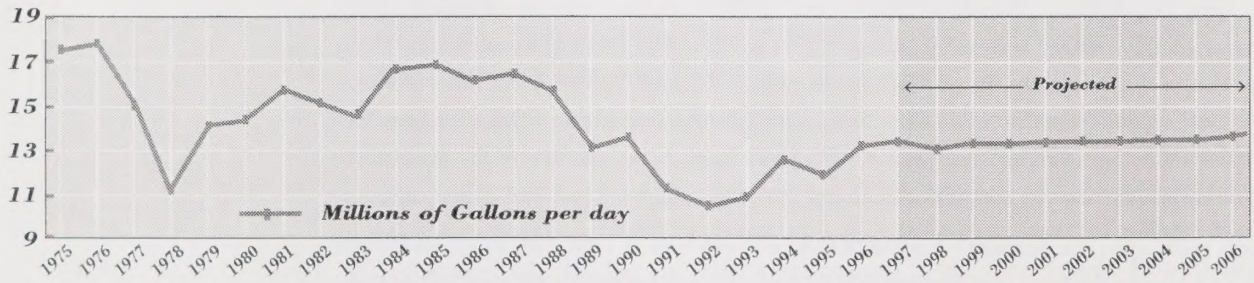
Regularly review the water rate structure to ensure that it encourages efficiency and is competitive.

POLICY N-20:

Maximize the conservation and efficient use of water in new and existing residences, businesses and industries.

Water should be regarded as a limited natural resource. A variety of economic and financial incentives can be used to encourage its conservation. In addition, water-saving appliances, drought-tolerant landscaping, recycled wastewater, and other measures can encourage its efficient use.

Historic Water Consumption and Projected Demand in Palo Alto



Source: City of Palo Alto Utilities Department and Planning Department

Conservation efforts necessitated by past droughts may have had lasting effects on household water use.

PROGRAM N-24:

Maintain citywide water conservation and efficiency programs for all customer classes.

PROGRAM N-25:

Where practical, incorporate federal, state, and other agency policies and standards for water efficiency into City codes, regulations, and procedures.

PROGRAM N-26:

Implement incentives for the use of drought-tolerant landscaping and recycled water for landscape irrigation.

POLICY N-21:

Reduce non-point source pollution in urban runoff from residential, commercial, industrial, municipal, and transportation land uses and activities.

Water quality in San Francisco Bay has been degraded over time by pollutants from urban runoff, sewage, sediment, industrial discharges, ships, and a wide variety of other sources. Significant progress has been made in controlling water pollution from "point" sources like wastewater plants and industry. "Non-point" sources have been more difficult to contain, since they include a wide range of activities and are dispersed throughout the community. Emissions and residual materials from vehicles including metals, by-products of combustion, oil and grease are the greatest concern, but even activities like grading and lawn care can create problems. For example, preliminary data in the mid-1990s indicated that as much as 80% of the urban runoff copper load is coming from vehicle brake dust. Pollutants like copper, diazinon, lead, and zinc, are routinely carried by rainwater from paved surfaces and lawns to the City's storm drains and creeks. The programs below are intended to reduce non-point source pollution and restore water quality in the creeks and Bay.

In 1991, members of Leadership Palo Alto, Girl Scout Troop 784 and the Barron Park Boy Scout Troop stencilled "No Dumping" signs across Palo Alto storm drains, warning that pesticides, paints, antifreeze and motor oil poured into them also pollutes the Bay.

Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Public Works Dept.

PROGRAM N-27:

Work with regulatory agencies, environmental groups, affected businesses, and other stakeholders to identify economically viable Best Management Practices (BMPs) for reducing pollution. Participate in BMPs pilot studies to identify new pollution control measures.

PROGRAM N-28:

Continue public education programs on water quality issues, including Best Management Practices (BMPs) for residents, businesses, contractors, and City employees.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are programs, technologies, operating methods, or other measures that control, prevent, or reduce pollution. They can be utilized to address water pollution from a variety of sources, including construction, urban runoff, and various commercial, residential, industrial, and municipal activities. BMPs guidelines for water quality are

published by the City of Palo Alto and the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program. An extensive list of BMPs is also described in the California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbook. Common BMPs for residents, businesses, contractors, and the City are shown in the box below.

Best Management Practices (BMPs)

A variety of practices can help control the use of pollutants and prevent their discharge into the environment. BMPs may be engineered or they may involve behavioral changes. Typical BMPs include:

For Residents:

- Use of safer products around the house
- Proper storage, use, and disposal of hazardous household cleaners, fertilizers, pesticides, and garden supplies
- Participation in household hazardous waste collection programs
- Recycling of motor oil and anti-freeze
- Refraining from illegal dumping
- Reducing vehicle use
- Reducing discharges from car washing and maintenance

For Contractors

- Proper methods of paving, construction, and painting
- Selection of environmentally-safe materials
- Proper methods of delivery and storage of materials
- Responsible management and disposal of solid waste, contaminated soil, and concrete waste
- Proper sanitary sewer and septic waste management
- Proper methods of fueling and maintaining vehicles and equipment
- Employee and subcontractor training
- Erosion control measures

For Businesses:

- Prevention of improper discharges into storm drains
- Proper vehicle and equipment fueling, washing, maintenance and repair
- Proper loading and storage practices
- Proper maintenance of buildings and grounds
- Employee training.

For the City:

- Proper land use planning and development review
- Stenciling of storm drain inlets
- Hazardous waste collection and recycling
- Prevention of illegal dumping and illicit connections to storm drains
- Prevention and detection of overflow from sanitary sewers
- Street-sweeping
- Storm drain pipeline and catch basin cleaning
- Roadway maintenance
- Maintenance of detention/infiltration devices
- Storm channel and creek maintenance
- Use of infiltration systems, man-made wetlands, biofilters, and detention basins
- Use of oil/water separators and water quality inlets.

PROGRAM N-29:

Actively participate in programs such as the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program to improve the quality of stormwater runoff.

This program includes Palo Alto, twelve other cities in Santa Clara County, the County, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District. The jurisdictions have a joint permit to discharge stormwater into creeks and the Bay and have joint responsibility for implementing the Urban Runoff Management Plan for Santa Clara County.

PROGRAM N-30:

Conduct regular street-sweeping to minimize road surface pollutant runoff.

PROGRAM N-31:

Evaluate spill response, cleanup, and follow-up investigation procedures to reduce the impacts of toxic spills on water quality in the City's creeks and San Francisco Bay.

PROGRAM N-32:

Actively work to reduce the amount of metals contained in brake pads, tires, and other automotive parts, thereby reducing urban runoff pollution from metals. Continue Palo Alto's leadership role in encouraging the re-engineering of vehicles to reduce pollution from metals.

PROGRAM N-33:

Study the impacts on storm water pollution of architectural copper and consider limiting its use, if warranted.

POLICY N-22:

Limit the amount of impervious surface in new development or public improvement projects to reduce urban runoff into storm drains, creeks, and San Francisco Bay.

PROGRAM N-34:

Evaluate the use of permeable paving materials that allow for natural percolation and site drainage.

POLICY N-23:

Reduce the discharge of toxic materials into the City's sanitary sewer collection system by promoting the use of Best Management Practices.

PROGRAM N-35:

Work with commercial and industrial dischargers to recover metals onsite rather than discharging them into the sanitary sewer system.

POLICY N-24:

Improve storm drainage performance by constructing new system improvements where necessary and replacing undersized or otherwise inadequate lines with larger lines or parallel lines.

The stormwater collection system in Palo Alto is inadequate in several areas. The highest priorities for improvement are the Barron Park area; the Newell Road outfall project to relieve flooding along Channing Avenue from Middlefield Road to Center Street and along Lincoln Avenue from Fife Avenue to Channing Avenue; the Harker Avenue system; the Lincoln Avenue system; and the Dana Avenue pipeline.

PROGRAM N-36:

Complete improvements to the storm drainage system consistent with the priorities outlined in the City's 1993 Storm Drainage Master Plan, provided that an appropriate funding mechanism is identified and approved by the City Council.

Additional City Council policy decisions are required related to the storm drainage system capacity. The City is committed to repair and improvement of the system, as necessary.

POLICY N-25:

Reduce pollutant levels in City wastewater discharges.

Specific pollutants of concern within wastewater are arsenic, cadmium, chromium, copper, cyanide, mercury, selenium, zinc, and dioxin. The Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP) and the City of Palo Alto have placed their highest priority on reducing the amount of copper in wastewater discharges.

PROGRAM N-37:

Monitor wastewater treatment industry practices relating to the use of chlorine to disinfect wastewater.

The use of chlorine in wastewater treatment is being questioned and discouraged by many environmental advocacy organizations because it can combine with organic chemicals to form highly toxic and persistent compounds such as dioxin and chloroform. Most of the chlorine used by Palo Alto reacts with pathogenic organisms and bacteria, and is transformed to chloride. The concern is that some chlorine will produce chlorinated hydrocarbons such as dioxin which can accumulate in living tissue. Presently, the level of chlorinated by-products (such as chloroform and other chlorinated hydrocarbons) meets all regulatory requirements. Nonetheless, the wastewater treatment industry is exploring other disinfection technologies and a shift is likely in the coming years. Ultraviolet light is the substitute that looks best now, given available data. Once successfully demonstrated at larger facilities, Palo Alto may decide to change to a different disinfection method in the future.

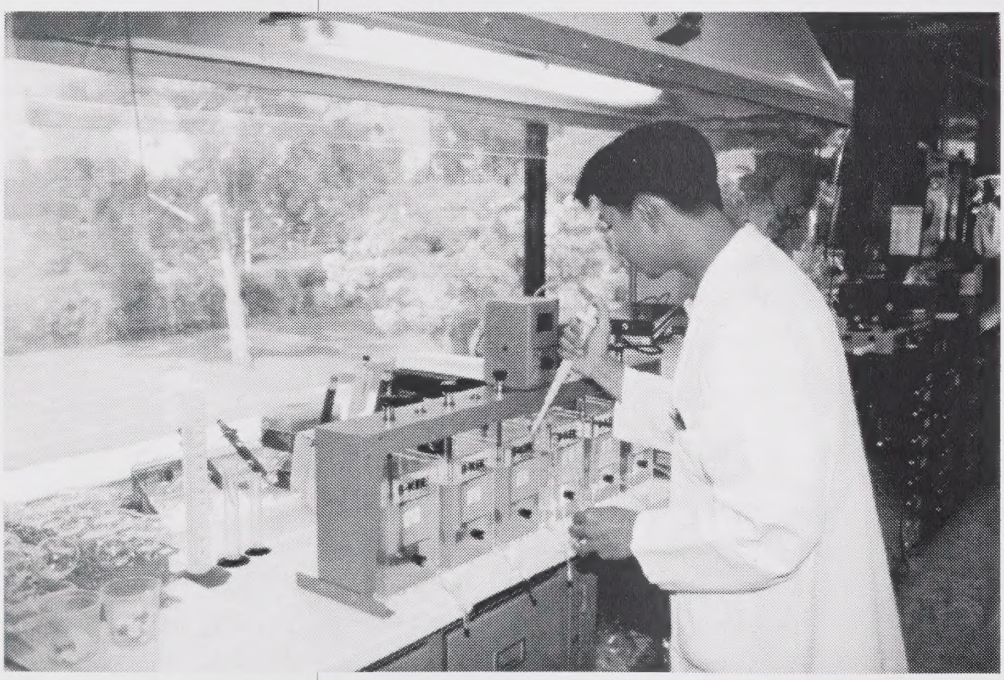


Photo courtesy of the Water Quality Control Division of the Public Works Dept.

The Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant is charged with the mission to protect the South Bay and its environment and has received numerous awards including the EPA's National O&M Excellence Award and the Susanne Wilson Environmental Achievement Award.

AIR QUALITY

GOAL N-5: Clean, Healthful Air for Palo Alto and the San Francisco Bay Area.

Air quality in the San Francisco Air Basin has improved considerably since the 1970s. The Bay Area has complied with state and federal standards for nitrogen oxides and sulfur dioxide for some time. It was recently designated as being in compliance with US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards for ozone, although it is still not in compliance with California Air Resource Board (CARB) standards. The area does meet CARB standards for carbon monoxide (CO) and a request for federal CO compliance was recently submitted to the EPA. Air quality does not meet state standards for PM_{10}, that is, particulate matter smaller than 10 microns in diameter.

See definition of PM_{10} in the Glossary

Motor vehicles are the primary source of air pollution in Palo Alto and the Bay Area. Land use patterns which poorly disperse housing densities, employment centers, and mass transit facilities, lead to excessive automobile usage. Most air pollution control strategies have aimed at reducing vehicle use and using cleaner-burning fuels. Other sources of air pollution in Palo Alto include electronics firms, auto repair businesses, dry cleaners, and other businesses making regular use of chemicals or solvents. Common sources of PM_{10} include road dust, construction, grading, and wood-burning stoves and fireplaces.

See Policies T-1, L-9, L-11, and L-19

Palo Alto's policies and programs are designed to reduce dependence on motor vehicles, the primary source of air pollution in the Bay Area.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Every City and County in the Bay Area must accept a portion of the responsibility for addressing air quality problems. Air pollution is a regional problem that does not respect jurisdictional boundaries. The policies and programs below set forth commitments by the City to assume its fair share of the effort to improve air quality. A diverse strategy is proposed, incorporating support for state and federal programs, new City programs that reduce air pollution from City vehicles and operating procedures, limits on wood burning, and controls on construction to reduce airborne dust. Because CO levels are also a concern, the City has adopted several policies and programs to reduce traffic congestion and idling. Most of these policies can be found in the Transportation Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

See also Goal T-9 and associated policies and programs on regional solutions to traffic congestion

POLICY N-26:

Support regional, state, and federal programs that improve air quality in the Bay Area.

See also Goals T-1, T-2, and T-3 and associated policies and Program T-56

PROGRAM N-38:

Provide City input on significant proposals for air quality legislation and state implementation plans.

PROGRAM N-39:

Assist the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) in its efforts to achieve compliance with existing air quality regulations.

PROGRAM N-40:

Expand the use of alternative fuels for City vehicles and establish a program to encourage expanded use of such fuels in private vehicles. To support this program, encourage the development of alternative fuel infrastructure (for instance, electric plug-ins) in parking facilities and other key locations around the City.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

The City maintains a fleet of alternative-fuel vehicles, and this program will expand in the future under this plan.

PROGRAM N-41:

Support legislative programs that result in the removal of the oldest and dirtiest vehicles on the roadway.

POLICY N-27:

Reduce emission of particulates from wood burning stoves, construction activity, automobiles, and other sources.

PROGRAM N-42:

Require all new wood-burning stoves or fireplace inserts to comply with EPA-approved standards.

PROGRAM N-43:

Provide a homeowner handout outlining low emission alternatives to wood-burning stoves or fireplaces.

PROGRAM N-44:

Develop public information programs to educate the public on Best Management Practices in the use of wood burning appliances, including reduction of wood burning during critical periods of poor air quality.

POLICY N-28:

Encourage developers of new projects in Palo Alto, including City projects, to provide improvements that reduce the necessity of driving alone.

These improvements could include preferential parking spaces for car pools, bicycle parking and storage facilities, bus stop shelters, and reduced parking requirements.

PROGRAM N-45:

Recommend revisions to proposed projects as needed to reduce air quality impacts, including improvements that reduce single occupant vehicle use.

POLICY N-29:

All potential sources of odor and/or toxic air contaminants should be adequately buffered, or mechanically or otherwise mitigated to avoid odor and toxic impacts that violate relevant human health standards.

GOAL N-6: An Environment Free of the Damaging Effects of Biological and Chemical Hazardous Materials.

Hazardous materials are handled and stored on a number of properties in Palo Alto, primarily in the East Bayshore and San Antonio Road/Bayshore corridor, the University Avenue/Downtown Area, the South of Forest Area (SOFA), and at Stanford Research Park. Although the use of hazardous materials is carefully regulated today, past activities have led to the contamination of several sites in the City. Contamination has resulted from leaking underground storage tanks, disposal of hazardous materials, and various industrial practices. The potential for accidents and spills means that the City must strive to reduce risks and be prepared for emergencies.

Fuel leak sites are located throughout the City but are concentrated in the areas of University Avenue/Downtown, SOFA, and Stanford Research Park, and along San Antonio Road, Alma Street and El Camino Real. Some of these fuel leaks have resulted in substantial soil and groundwater contamination.

There are 21 sites in the City that have been identified as sources of industrial solvent or metals contamination. Most are located in the Stanford Research Park, including one at 640 Page Mill Road that is listed as a "Superfund" site under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has delegated responsibility for cleanup of this site to the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). There are other nearby contaminated sites on Page Mill Road and California Avenue. In addition, co-mingled groundwater plumes are being extracted and treated at the Oregon Expressway railroad underpass and in the vicinity of Hillview Avenue and Porter Drive. The former Aydin site on Hanover Street and the Varian site on Hansen Way also have contamination problems. These sites are the responsibility of the State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

The City will continue to work towards remediation on contaminated sites and will prevent future contamination by following Best Management Practices. Most required site cleanups are already underway. One of the keys to preventing future hazards is public education, both for residents and for businesses. The public can be informed not only of safe methods of hazardous waste disposal but also of alternatives to hazardous chemical use for household applications like cleaning and lawn care. Palo Alto will also continue its household hazardous waste collection programs and will strive to make these programs more convenient and accessible to residents.

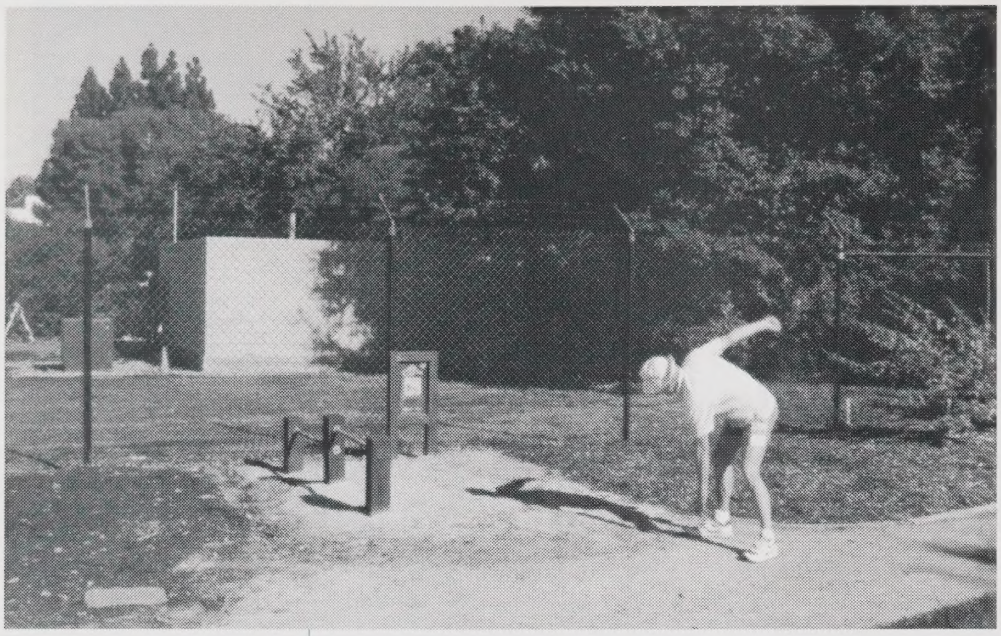
POLICY N-30:

Minimize the use of toxic and hazardous materials. Encourage the use of alternative materials and practices that are environmentally benign.

PROGRAM N-46:

Provide information to all user groups about:

- ***commonly used hazardous materials;***
- ***environmentally friendly alternatives; and***
- ***safe recycling and disposal methods.***



Cleanup of contaminated groundwater is an on-going environmental concern and is addressed through a variety of programs. In this photo, a ground water extraction and clean-up system is located adjacent to an exercise course at Hewlett-Packard headquarters in the Stanford Research Park.

PROGRAM N-47:

Continue City permitting procedures for commercial and industrial storage, use, and handling of hazardous materials.

Presently, City permit approval requires verification that the facility meets applicable City code requirements for the storage and handling of hazardous materials. However, state and federal law preempt the City from actually enacting ordinances regulating hazardous waste disposal. Authority for enforcement of state and federal hazardous waste regulations and laws currently rests with the EPA, the DTSC, and the Santa Clara County Hazardous Materials Compliance Division. However, under state law requiring implementation of unified hazardous materials programs in each county, negotiations are underway for the City to assume greater responsibility for permitting and enforcement.

PROGRAM N-48:

Continue sponsoring a regular household hazardous waste collection event.

Since 1983, the City has provided a monthly household hazardous waste drop-off day. On that day, household hazardous wastes may be dropped off at the Regional Water Quality Control Plant, where they are then packaged and disposed of by a certified hazardous waste contractor at no charge to residents.

PROGRAM N-49:

Study the relative costs, advantages, and disadvantages of joining the regional household hazardous waste program operated by the Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health.

PROGRAM N-50:

Continue the program that allows small quantity generators to dispose of hazardous waste at cost.

POLICY N-31:

Continue working with appropriate agencies to clean up hazardous waste sites and contaminated groundwater.

POLICY N-32:

Support public agency policies, regulations, legislation, and programs that implement the Santa Clara County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

Any proposed commercial hazardous waste facilities should be consistent with the siting criteria included in the Santa Clara County Hazardous Waste Management Plan (CHWMP). Such facilities must be located in the City's Hazardous Waste Facility (HW) combining district and must comply with its associated site development regulations. These regulations ensure compatibility with neighboring land uses, mitigation of environmental impacts, and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and the CHWMP.

POLICY N-33:

Protect City authority for the approval or denial of proposed commercial hazardous waste treatment, storage, or disposal facilities in the City. Continue to support the concept of "fair share" agreements between counties in the siting of such facilities.

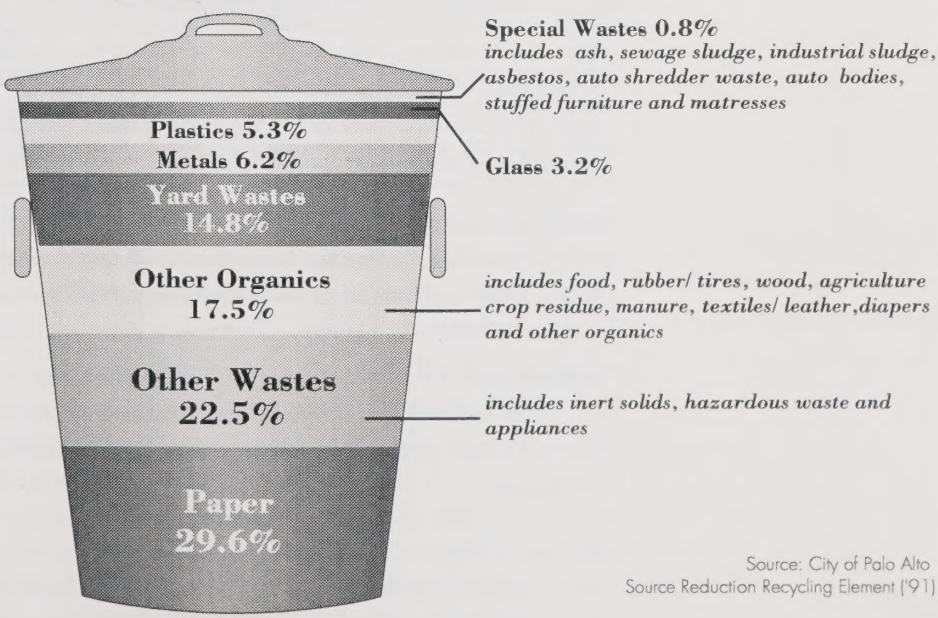
SOLID WASTE

GOAL N-7: Reduced Volumes of Solid Waste; Solid Waste Disposed in an Environmentally Safe, Efficient, Manner.

Approximately one-third of the solid waste generated within the City is delivered to the 137-acre municipal landfill located off Embarcadero Road east of Highway 101. The remaining two-thirds of the waste stream is transferred to the regional Sunnyvale Material and Recovery Transfer (SMaRT) Station©. There, waste is sorted to remove recyclable goods for sale at market rates. Waste that can not be recycled is deposited at the Kirby Canyon Landfill in San Jose. Assuming that conditions remain approximately the same, Palo Alto's municipal landfill will be operational until 2014. After its closure, all of the City's waste will go to the SMaRT Station©.

The City oversees a curbside recycling service and operates the Palo Alto Recycling Center at the landfill. Curbside collection service includes glass, cans, bottles, cardboard, newspaper, scrap metal, yard waste, motor oil, household batteries, and certain plastics. The Recycling Center accepts aluminum, bi-metal cans, glass, bottles, newspaper, cardboard, paper board, motor oil, white paper, scrap metal, polystyrene foam, paper board, magazines, certain plastics, phone books, anti- freeze, oil filters, household batteries, and mixed paper.

Composition of Palo Alto's Waste Stream



Source: City of Palo Alto
Source Reduction Recycling Element ('91)

Because landfill space is limited, Palo Alto has embarked on a number of programs to reduce the amount of waste its citizens generate. Some of these programs became priorities after the State passed the California Integrated Waste Management Act in 1989 (AB 939). The Act required that all cities prepare a solid waste Source Reduction and Recycling Element explaining how they would reduce the amount of solid waste generated by 25 percent by 1995 and 50 percent by the year 2000. Palo Alto completed this Element in 1991 and has reduced solid waste generation by 40 percent as of July 1996. To reach its year 2000 target, a greater emphasis must be placed on waste prevention, reuse, and composting, and additional programs such as mixed paper and construction and demolition debris recycling should be implemented. The City should be a role model in this process.

In addition to City-operated services, Palo Alto residents can drop off recyclables at convenient locations.

POLICY N-34:

Reduce the amount of solid waste disposed in the City's landfill by reducing the amount of waste generated and promoting the cost-effective reuse of materials that would otherwise be placed in a landfill.

PROGRAM N-51:

Regularly review the landfill fee structure to ensure that it encourages a reduction in solid waste disposal.

The City has determined that a regressive fee structure—that is, one that requires large users to pay more—is an effective way to encourage recycling and reduce the amount of solid waste disposed.

PROGRAM N-52:

Improve City composting practices and continue promoting the household composting program.

PROGRAM N-53:

Continue to develop cost-effective source separation programs for recyclable solid waste materials for residential and commercial customers.

Source separation programs provide different receptacles for different types of waste. This allows waste to be recycled more economically. Different types of source separation programs may be suitable for different types of businesses. For instance, a restaurant generates large amounts of glass and cardboard, while an office generates more paper.

PROGRAM N-54:

Continue to develop long-term solid waste management programs that include safe and environmentally sound disposal methods such as the SMaRT Station©.

In the future, it may become more effective to rely on centralized solid waste separation and recycling rather than having each solid waste generator carry out a separation program. The City will continue to seek the most effective combination of source and centralized separation programs.

POLICY N-35:

Reduce solid waste generation through salvage and reuse of building materials, including architecturally and historically significant materials.

The demolition of existing structures creates materials requiring disposal. The recycling of building materials can reduce this portion of the solid waste stream. Such recycling efforts can result in the preservation of historically and architecturally important components of structures.

See also Program L-57 regardarding the salvage of Historic Building materials for re-use

PROGRAM N-55:

Maintain and expand the use of the Recycling Center at the City's refuse disposal area.

POLICY N-36:

Encourage the use of reusable, returnable, recyclable, and repairable goods through incentives, educational displays and activities, and City purchasing policies and practices.

Much of the waste generated in Palo Alto comes from products designed to be used once and then thrown away. Encouraging the use of products that are reusable, returnable, and do not use excessive packaging could reduce the amount of solid waste significantly. City procurement policies that favor recycled products can set a positive example for residents and businesses and encourage a positive attitude towards recycling. Increased use of these goods will also lower their prices.

POLICY N-37:

Ensure the environmentally sound disposal of solid waste.

POLICY N-38:

Support state and federal legislation encouraging the use of recyclable goods.

Palo Alto supports state and federal efforts to provide tax incentives and other regulatory changes that support the market for recycled goods. Programs that reduce the cost of recycled goods can help overcome consumer reluctance and ultimately increase market demand.

NOISE

GOAL N-8: An Environment That Minimizes the Adverse Impacts of Noise.

Noise is part of everyday life in an urban community. People can tolerate noise to a degree but above certain levels, noise becomes a source of annoyance and even a health hazard. Noise may disrupt sleep, cause stress and tension, and interfere with conversation and many other aspects of day-to-day life. Probably the most pervasive source of noise in Palo Alto is motor vehicles. However, trains, aircraft, concerts, electrical substations, and mechanical equipment are also contributors, as are random sources like leafblowers and construction equipment. Average noise levels are highest along Highway 101, El Camino Real, Alma Street and the railroad tracks, the Palo Alto Airport, and along major traffic corridors like Middlefield Road and Oregon Expressway. Existing noise levels are shown on Map N-3. The Map illustrates noise levels at various distances from major sources like freeways and airports. The City will continue its efforts to curb noise impacts from these sources and will also take actions that prevent adverse levels of noise from being generated by new development. The City regulates noise impacts from loud vehicles and has a Noise Ordinance designed to address particular noise problems. It assists agencies that develop noise control legislation and promote enforcement of adopted standards. Palo Alto also is involved in ongoing negotiations with the operators of the Shoreline Amphitheater to resolve the noise problems from this facility. The City is committed to mitigating future airport noise by participating in public forums on this issue.

See Maps N-3 and N-4 for existing and future noise exposure contours

The City is committed to the location of higher density housing near transit stations and routes. Such locations often have background noise levels above that which is normally desired for residential yards, patios, balconies and other similar exterior spaces associated with residential use. However, the City is willing to tolerate higher levels of exterior noise where the outdoor areas affected are not intended for extensive use and interior standards can be achieved. Sound walls required to meet guidelines should be attractive either through landscaping or other means.

The policies, programs, and guidelines below address the City's desire to:

- locate new land uses and development projects in areas with compatible noise levels,
- minimize the noise created by new development and its impacts on existing land uses, and
- minimize disturbances within the City due to excessive noise.

POLICY N-39:

Encourage the location of land uses in areas with compatible noise environments. Use the guidelines in the table "Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environment" to determine compatibility.

- **The guideline for maximum outdoor noise levels in residential areas is an Ldn of 60 dB. This level is a guideline for the design and location of future development and a goal for the reduction of noise in existing development. However, 60 Ldn is a guideline which cannot necessarily be reached in all residential areas within the constraints of economic or aesthetic feasibility. This guideline will be primarily applied where outdoor use is a major consideration (e.g., backyards in single family housing developments, and recreational areas in multiple family housing projects). Where the City determines that providing an Ldn of 60 dB or lower outdoors is not feasible, the noise level in outdoor areas intended for recreational use should be reduced to as close to the standard as feasible through project design.**
- **The indoor noise level as required by the State of California Noise Insulation Standards must not exceed an Ldn of 45 dB in multiple family dwellings. This indoor criteria shall also apply to new single family homes in Palo Alto.**
- **Interior noise levels in new single family and multiple family residential units exposed to an exterior Ldn of 60 dB or greater should be limited to a maximum instantaneous noise level of 50 dB in the bedrooms. Maximum instantaneous noise levels in other rooms should not exceed 55 dB.**

Noise exposure can be determined based on the noise contour map included in this plan, or more detailed noise measurements, if appropriate.

POLICY N-40:

Evaluate the potential for noise pollution and ways to reduce noise impacts when reviewing development and activities in Palo Alto and surrounding communities.

Noise impacts associated with new development include both short-term construction impacts and long-term operational impacts, including traffic. City policies address both sources. Construction activities are regulated to minimize disturbances to surrounding uses. Long-term impacts are reduced through a number of measures, including design and construction methods that reflect or absorb sound, landscaping and barriers, and site planning to reduce noise

exposure. Areas where residential and non-residential uses are mixed or close together are a particular concern. Design of new projects should reduce noise from parking, loading, and refuse storage areas and from heating, ventilation, and air conditioning apparatus.

POLICY N-41:

When a proposed project is subject to CEQA, the noise impact of the project on existing residential land uses should be evaluated in terms of the increase in existing noise levels and potential for adverse community impact, regardless of existing background noise levels. If an area is below the applicable maximum noise guideline, an increase in noise up to the maximum should not necessarily be allowed. A project should be considered to cause a significant degradation of the noise environment if it meets any of the following criteria:

- **The project would cause the average 24-hour noise level (Ldn) to increase by 5.0 dB or more in an existing residential area, even if the Ldn would remain below 60 dB;**
- **The project would cause the Ldn to increase by 3.0 dB or more in an existing residential area, thereby causing the Ldn in the area to exceed 60 dB;**
- **The project would cause an increase of 3.0 dB or more in an existing residential area where the Ldn currently exceeds 60 dB.**

POLICY N-42:

The City may require proposals to reduce noise impacts of development on adjacent properties through appropriate means including, but not limited to, the following:

- **Construct noise walls when compatible with aesthetic concerns.**
- **Screen and control noise sources such as parking, outdoor activities and mechanical equipment.**
- **Increase setbacks for noise sources from adjacent dwellings.**
- **Whenever possible, retain fences, walls or landscaping that serve as noise buffers although design, safety and other impacts must be addressed.**
- **Use soundproofing materials and double-glazed windows.**
- **Control hours of operation, including deliveries and trash pickup, to minimize noise impacts.**

POLICY N-43:

Protect the community and especially sensitive noise receptors, including schools, hospitals, and senior care facilities, from excessive noise.

PROGRAM N-56:

Participate in appropriate public forums to ensure that future activities at large commercial airports in the region do not negatively effect noise levels in Palo Alto.

PROGRAM N-57:

Encourage the Joint Powers Board to pursue technologies to reduce train whistle noise in communities served by Caltrain.

PROGRAM N-58:

Continue to work to reduce noise impacts created by events and activities taking place in adjoining communities.

PROGRAM N-59:

Evaluate the feasibility of adopting noise criteria in the purchase of new City vehicles and equipment.

An important part of the City's noise reduction strategy is to identify, test, and use quieter equipment and work methods for such activities as landscape maintenance.

PROGRAM N-60:

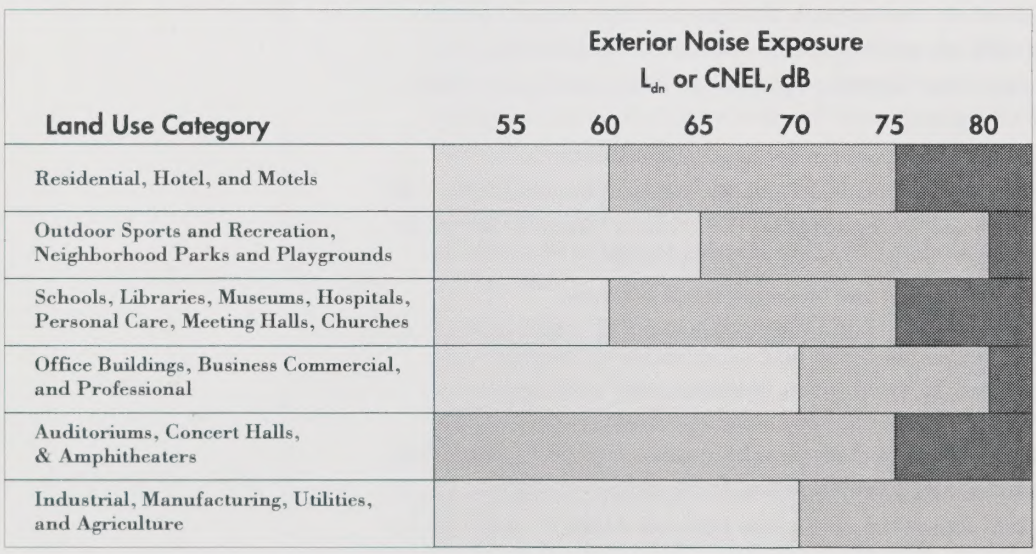
Update the Noise Ordinance to provide for clear interpretation of the regulations, and to review the appropriateness of existing standards. Strictly enforce the Noise Ordinance.

PROGRAM N-61:

Evaluate changes to the Noise Ordinance to reduce the impact of leaf blower noise.

The Noise Ordinance is primarily enforced by police patrol officers. Common residential noise sources include music, parties, barking dogs, and power equipment such as leaf blowers, lawn mowers, and swimming pool pumps. Noise Ordinance controls apply to each of these disturbances. Common commercial and industrial noise sources include pumps and air compressors, air conditioners, and construction equipment. Most noise complaints about industry are made by residents of nearby areas when machinery is run during the evenings. These problems can usually be reduced by restricting operating hours or making engineering modifications.

Land Use Compatibility for Community Noise Environment



Normally Acceptable — Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved are of normal convention, construction, without any special insulation requirements.

Conditionally Acceptable — Specified land use may be permitted only after detailed analysis of the noise reduction requirements and needed noise insulation features included in the design.

Unacceptable — New construction or development should generally not be undertaken because mitigation is usually not feasible to comply with noise element policies.

Source: Illingworth & Rodkin, Inc.

These noise standards will be applied as land use decisions are made.

GOAL N-9: A Clean, Efficient, Competitively-priced Energy Supply That Makes Use of Cost-effective Renewable Resources.

See also Goal H-5 and associated policy and program

Electricity and natural gas are the primary non-transportation energy elements used in Palo Alto. The City operates its own electric and natural gas utilities, and it intends to operate these utilities in the deregulated competitive environment for the mutual benefit of the City, its residents, and its businesses. Its Utilities Department purchases electric power from the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA), the Northern California Power Agency (NCPA), and other energy suppliers and marketers. Palo Alto purchases natural gas at market-based costs from suppliers including Canadian suppliers via a Pacific Gas Transmission pipeline.

Energy supplies continue to be limited resources and their consumption continues to have global environmental impacts. The City's policies and programs recognize the importance of efficient energy use and the importance of ensuring that a reliable supply is maintained at a competitive cost for Palo Alto Utilities customers. Efficient use of energy can be encouraged through modified rate structures, changes in consumer behavior, use of energy-saving appliances, and various building design and construction techniques. A reliable, cost-effective supply can be encouraged by pursuing a variety of supply options.

POLICY N-44:

Maintain Palo Alto's long-term supply of electricity and natural gas while addressing environmental and economic concerns.

This is similar to Palo Alto's policy regarding water supplies. The City recognizes that cost-effective and environmentally sound solutions to meeting its energy needs include energy conservation and efficiency. The development of such solutions requires participation in research and development, and demonstration programs of renewable resources technologies and other public interest programs. When financially feasible, the City will pursue alternative market-priced supplies of energy to minimize the need for expensive supplemental power.

PROGRAM N-62:

Implement gas and electric rate structures that encourage energy conservation and that are in balance with other rate- making objectives, such as providing competitive rates. Set rates to achieve a balance between actual service costs, market prices, and the goal of promoting conservation and efficient use. Continue to provide a baseline service rate.

Traditionally, utility rate structures discouraged conservation by charging less per unit as more was consumed. Energy shortages during the 1970s forced a restructuring of rates to consider long-term supply constraints. The concept of a "baseline rate" was developed to provide all customers with enough energy to meet basic needs at an affordable cost. Higher rates are charged for units used beyond the base consumption level. The use of rate structures that encourage energy efficiency will be balanced with other ratemaking objectives involving competition and cost-of-service principles.

POLICY N-45:

Continually evaluate and revise forecasts for electric power demand. Pursue adequate low cost supplies to meet this demand by participating in cost-effective programs offered by Northern California Power Agency (NCPA) or other suppliers and marketers of energy.

POLICY N-46:

Retain the ability to purchase supplemental gas and electric power from other potential providers to remain competitive in the marketplace.

POLICY N-47:

Optimize energy conservation and efficiency in new and existing residences, businesses, and industries in Palo Alto.

Efficient use of natural gas and electricity is required in all new construction by State building codes that require ceiling and wall insulation and regulate the number and size of windows. Many buildings in Palo Alto were constructed before these standards went into effect. Their remodeling and renovation offers an opportunity to increase their energy efficiency. The Utilities Department offers a variety of demand-side management services to help its customers reduce their energy expenses.

PROGRAM N-63:

Implement energy efficiency programs.

PROGRAM N-64:

Encourage continuation of public education programs addressing energy conservation and efficiency.

PROGRAM N-65:

Incorporate cost-effective energy conservation measures into construction, maintenance, and City operation and procurement practices.

Weatherization of City buildings can substantially reduce energy costs. Similarly, retrofitting facilities like swimming pools with solar heat can drastically reduce energy consumption. Such projects have been pursued in the past and will continue to be pursued in the future. Additionally, the City's purchasing policies should consider energy efficiency and should favor products that help the City achieve its conservation objectives.

PROGRAM N-66:

Incorporate state and federal energy efficiency standards and policies in relevant City codes, regulations, and procedures.

These standards include the California Energy Commission's Title 24 program, which ensures energy efficiency in new construction and additions, and the California Solar Rights Act, which protects solar access.

POLICY N-48:

Encourage the appropriate use of alternative energy technologies.

Alternative energy technologies include those that use sunlight, wind, and other non-traditional forms of energy to replace work done by oil, coal, and other limited resources. The City can encourage the use of these technologies by ensuring that its regulations do not impede their use, using City facilities for demonstration projects where practical, providing economic incentives to retrofit existing structures, supporting state and federal development of new energy resources, promoting active and passive solar building designs, and providing information to consumers.

PROGRAM N-67:

Provide information and advice on the use of alternative energy technologies, including the relative costs and benefits of different types of fuel, to all customers.

Information could include classes, displays, design guidelines, and increased publicity for various energy programs.

PROGRAM N-68:

Monitor other utilities that successfully use alternative energy sources and seek funding for similar projects that would be appropriate in Palo Alto.

NATURAL HAZARDS

GOAL N-10: Protection of Life and Property From Natural Hazards, Including Earthquake, Landslide, Flooding, and Fire.

Palo Alto must be prepared for emergency situations related to earthquakes, other geologic hazards, flooding, and wildfire. The City's goal is to minimize the potential for injury, loss of life, and property damage resulting from these hazards. Emergency preparedness and public education are both critical parts of achieving this goal. It is also critical to use the development review process as a way to reduce exposure to hazards in new projects. The design and operation of new projects in risk-prone areas must consider relevant geologic, seismic, flood, and fire hazards.

General Safety Measures

POLICY N-49:

Focus efforts to reduce exposure to natural hazards on those areas where the greatest risks exist.

Areas of the City that have been identified as having particular geologic, seismic, flood, or fire related hazards are shown on a series of maps at the end of this Element. Seismic hazards include groundshaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, landsliding, ground settlement, and seismically-induced flooding. Flood hazards include saltwater flooding from the Bay and freshwater flooding from creeks overflowing their banks. Fire hazards include wildfires, primarily in the foothills.

Limited segments of the existing storm drainage system are insufficient to handle large winter storms without minor flooding.

See also Policy N-1 and Program N-3

POLICY N-50:

Implement public safety improvements, such as access roads and other infrastructure, in a manner that is sensitive to the environment.

Palo Alto's utilities, public safety and other City infrastructure improvements need to be carefully designed to minimize negative environmental impacts. This applies throughout the City with special attention given to the baylands and foothills, where improvements should generally be located as close as possible to access roads.

Seismic and Other Geologic Hazards

See Map N-5 for geotechnical constraints and hazards

POLICY N-51:

Minimize exposure to geologic hazards, including slope stability, subsidence, and expansive soils, and to seismic hazards including groundshaking, fault rupture, liquefaction, and landsliding.

See Map N-8 for locations of earthquake hazards

Palo Alto is located in an very geologically active part of the world. The San Andreas Fault—long considered the major seismic risk in California—passes through the community. The Fault is believed capable of producing a magnitude 8.4 earthquake. This would cause very violent groundshaking in much of Palo Alto, with fault rupture possible along the San Andreas, Monte Vista, and Hermit Faults, and other fault traces around the Stanford Campus.

Past land use decisions in Palo Alto have not always taken such hazards into consideration. Moreover, older buildings and infrastructure reflect the construction and engineering standards of their era which in most cases fall short of current standards for seismic safety. As a

The City stresses the importance of retrofitting buildings to address seismic hazards. This building at 401 Florence Street was upgraded to the 1991 Building Code in 1992.

result, a significant portion of the City would be at risk in the event of a major earthquake. The primary risks are building damage or collapse; disruption of lifelines, including water, sewer, gas, electric, and telephone; fire or explosion; and damage to transportation infrastructure.

See Map N-9 for the location of toxic gas hazards

Probably the greatest hazards are associated with fault rupture and groundshaking, although liquefaction hazards are significant in the area east of Highway 101 due to the porous nature and high water content of the soil. Liquefaction occurs when groundshaking causes water-saturated soil to become fluid and lose its strength.

See Map N-10 for levels of groundshaking intensity

Other geologic hazards in Palo Alto may or may not be associated with seismic events. Landsliding may result from heavy rain, erosion, removal of vegetation, or human activities. It is a common hazard in the foothills and its severity depends on slope, soil, and underlying geology. Landslide hazards are increased during earthquakes, particularly if the ground is saturated. Settlement and subsidence due to groundwater withdrawal has historically been a problem in south and east Palo Alto but has been largely halted by groundwater recharge efforts and reduced pumping. Seismically-induced flooding is a hazard due to the possibility of dam failure at Felt Lake, Searsville Lake, and Lagunita Reservoir, and the potential for levee failure near the Bay.

PROGRAM N-69:

Strictly enforce Uniform Building Code seismic safety restrictions.

PROGRAM N-70:

Continue to provide incentives for seismic retrofits of structures in the University Avenue/ Downtown area.

Chapter 18.49.060 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code provides for seismic and historic incentives in the Commercial Downtown (CD) districts.

PROGRAM N-71:

Allow development rights achieved through seismic upgrading of specified sites to be transferred to designated eligible receiver sites.

PROGRAM N-72:

Revise the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to recognize seismic, geologic, and soil related hazards.

See also Policies L-56 and L-57

Some parts of Palo Alto are at greater risk in a natural disaster than others. These areas could be zoned or otherwise regulated to reduce their development potential and require detailed geologic and engineering studies prior to development.

PROGRAM N-73:

Require preparation of a report from an engineering geologist that reviews geologic, soils, and engineering reports for developments in hazard areas. Establish appropriate fees to cover the cost of this review.

The City already requires geologic and soils investigations for development southwest of Interstate 280. Similar requirements should be explored in other areas of the City prone to high geologic hazards.

PROGRAM N-74:

Review and update, as appropriate, City code requirements for excavation, grading, and filling to ensure that they conform to currently accepted standards. Recover the cost of this work through grading permit fees.

Flood Hazards

POLICY N-52:

Minimize exposure to flood hazards by adequately reviewing proposed development in flood prone areas.

See Map N-6 for the location of flood prone areas

Limited areas of Palo Alto are subject to flooding following unusually heavy rainfall. Flooding is typically associated with overtopping of creek banks, inadequately sized bridges and culverts, and blocked storm drains. Most of the City is outside the 100-year flood plain boundary defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). However, a substantial area is subject to flooding in a 100-year storm and is designated as a Special Flood Hazard Area on FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Map.

The baylands and some of the land southwest of Highway 101 between Embarcadero Road and the Mountain View border are located in FEMA Flood Zone "AE." Theoretically, this area would be subject to inundation up to eight feet above sea level if overtopping or failure of bayfront levees occurred. To date, no such levee failure has ever occurred in Palo Alto.

As shown on Map N-6, other areas of the City are located in the FEMA flood zone "AO." The AO zone corresponds to land along the City's creeks subject to sheet flow between one and three feet deep during a 100-year storm. The largest AO areas are located along San Francisquito Creek in the vicinity of the Middlefield Road and Chaucer Street bridges. Smaller pockets of AO land are located between Matadero Creek and Charleston Road along Park Boulevard and the Caltrain tracks, and along the west side of El Camino Real. Some formerly flood-prone areas along Adobe Creek were removed from the FEMA maps in 1993 due to improvements completed by the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Additional areas along Matadero and Barron Creeks will be removed following completion of the bypass culvert project around the Barron Park neighborhood and other Matadero Creek improvements.

PROGRAM N-75:

Establish a standardized process for evaluating the impacts of development on the storm drainage system.

PROGRAM N-76:

Implement the requirements of FEMA relating to construction in Special Flood Hazard Areas as illustrated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

The FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps are available in the City of Palo Alto Public Works Department.

Fire Hazards

POLICY N-53:

Minimize exposure to wildland and urban fire hazards through rapid emergency response, proactive code enforcement, public education programs, use of modern fire prevention measures, and adequate emergency management preparation.

See Map N-7 for fire hazard areas. See Maps N-6, N-7,N-8, and N-9 for the locations of City critical facilities

Fire hazards are primarily associated with homes built in the foothills and in other areas where urban and wildland activities interface. The risk of fire is highest during the summer and autumn months when temperatures are high and humidity is low. The amount of risk is influenced by access, resident population, topography, response time, availability of water, exposure to wind, and type of vegetation. The Fire Department operates eight fire stations throughout the City and on the Stanford Campus. The Department currently responds to about 6,000 incidents per year. The Fire Department has mutual aid agreements with Menlo Park, Mountain View, Los Altos and Woodside, and jointly operates Station 8 in Foothills Park with Los Altos.

Fire hazard prevention in the foothills is reduced through low-density zoning, design review, and as shown here, vegetation management.

PROGRAM N-77:

Regularly review and update the Palo Alto Foothills Fire Management Plan and the fire emergency evacuation provisions in the City's Emergency Management Plan.

PROGRAM N-78:

Provide public education on fire safety, including evacuation routes and guidelines for clearance of landscaping and other hazards around structures.

See Maps N-6 through N-9 for the locations of evacuation routes

PROGRAM N-79:

Minimize fire hazards by implementing low density zoning in wildland fire hazard areas.

POLICY N-54:

Provide emergency fire and medical services consistent with the response time standards set forth in the Fire Department's annual budget.

PROGRAM N-80:

Evaluate measures for consolidation of services with other jurisdictions and automatic or mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions to improve efficiencies.

Emergency Management

POLICY N-55:

Minimize exposure to all hazards through emergency management planning.

See also Program G-10

Palo Alto conducts emergency preparedness planning on an on-going basis. Police and Fire Departments are assigned the major responsibilities, and various locations around the City are designated for shelter and emergency operations. All City departments have emergency plans and many have significant roles in restoring infrastructure and City services, providing shelter and welfare services, and coordinating communication. An Emergency Management Plan includes specific provisions for pre-emergency planning and post-disaster recovery.

PROGRAM N-81:

Regularly update and distribute the City of Palo Alto Emergency Management Plan, including the earthquake, flood, and fire emergency evacuation plans. Consult with the Palo Alto Unified School District in updating the Plan.

PROGRAM N-82:

Initiate public education programs that strongly encourage that each household in the City is prepared to be self-sufficient for 72 hours after a major earthquake. Update and distribute the City's earthquake preparedness guide, "Living with Our Faults."

The Emergency Management Plan should include a community education component that incorporates a "house-to-house" outreach program for disaster preparedness. It should also require that all City departments involved in emergency response and related agencies conduct annual disaster exercises. These exercises should incorporate critiques by the public and participating agencies. The disaster plan should be reviewed regularly.

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

Natural Areas

- Baylands/ tidal marsh
- Riparian habitat
- Contours (200ft) showing Foothills Areas
- Channelized creeks in Palo Alto
- Opportunity to restore creek to natural condition in park
- Opportunity to enhance natural creek.

Known Location of Sensitive Species

Note: Individual species icons are illustrative of general locations of species sightings rather than specific locations, and are not representative of the extent of probable habitat. The extent of habitat areas are similarly illustrative.

- California Clapper Rail
- California Black Rail
- Northern Harrier
- Salt Marsh Common Yellowthroat
- Burrowing Owl
- Great Horned Owl
- California Tiger Salamander
- Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse
- American kestrel
- Sharp shinned hawk
- Northwestern Pond Turtle
- California Red-legged frog
- Steelhead Trout
- Pt. Reyes Bird's Beak (Cooley Landing)

Source: Habitat Restoration Group

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map N-1

Natural Resource Areas

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[COMPPLAN]NATURAL.FGB View: PNATAREAS
Date: 02FEB98-11.40.50 By: DASCOMBE

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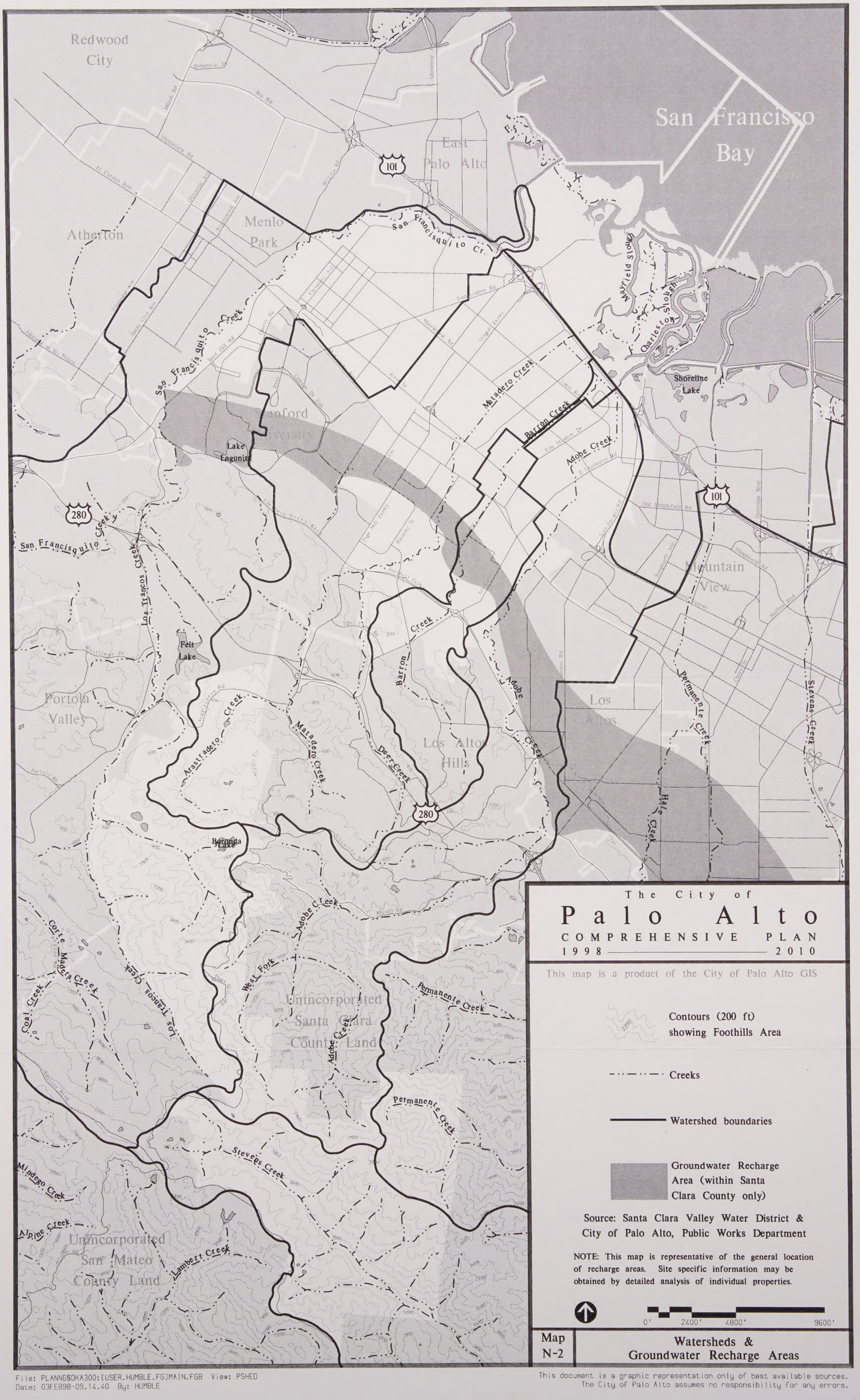

The City of

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COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

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Contours (200 ft) showing Foothills Area

Creeks

Watershed boundaries

Groundwater Recharge Area (within Santa Clara County only)

Source: Santa Clara Valley Water District & City of Palo Alto, Public Works Department

NOTE: This map is representative of the general location of recharge areas. Site specific information may be obtained by detailed analysis of individual properties.

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map N-2

Watersheds & Groundwater Recharge Areas

File: PLANNG$DKA300:[USER.HUMBLE.FGJMAIN.FGB View: PSHED
Date: 03FEB98-09.14.40 By: HUMBLE

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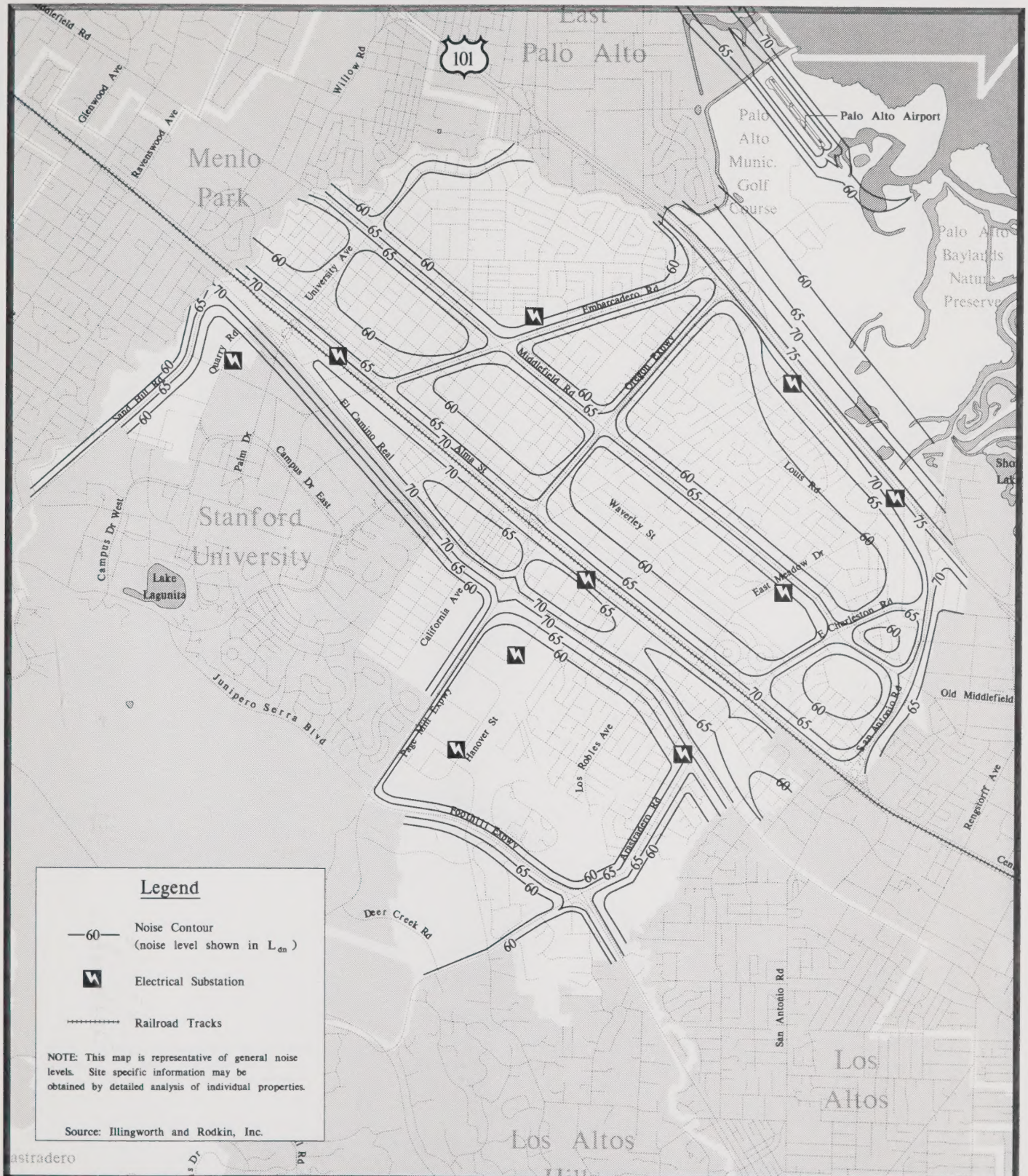

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Map N-3

Noise Exposure Contours

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[000000.COMPPLAN]NOISE.FGB View: PNOISE
Date: 29JAN98-09.55.10 By: DASCOMBE

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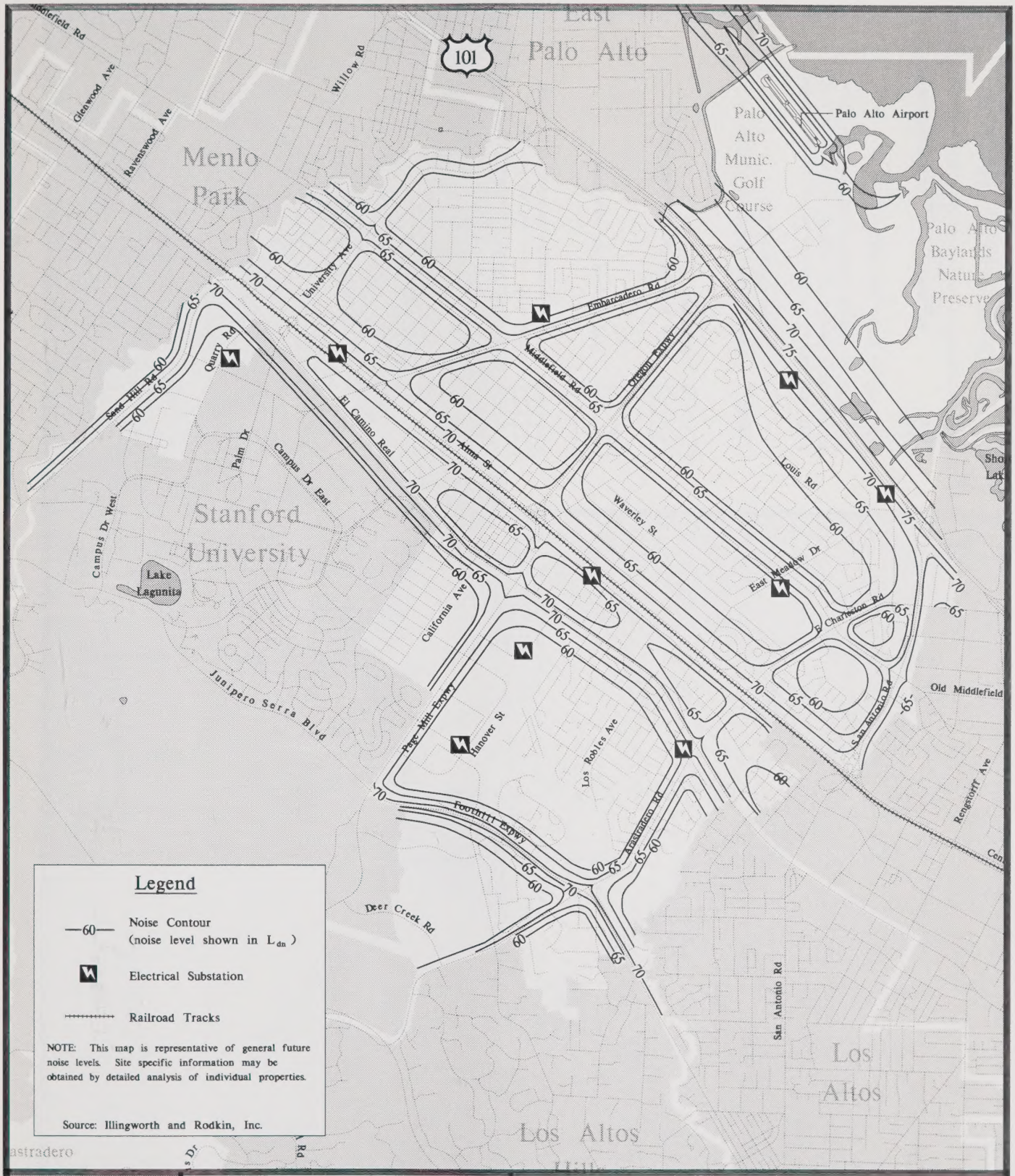

Legend

—60— Noise Contour (noise level shown in L_{dn})

Electrical Substation

Railroad Tracks

NOTE: This map is representative of general future noise levels. Site specific information may be obtained by detailed analysis of individual properties.

Source: Illingworth and Rodkin, Inc.

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

0' 2000' 4000'

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

Map N-4

Future Noise Contours

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[000000.COMPPLAN]NOISE.FGB View: PFNOISE
Date: 29JAN98-10.00.50 By: DASCOMBE

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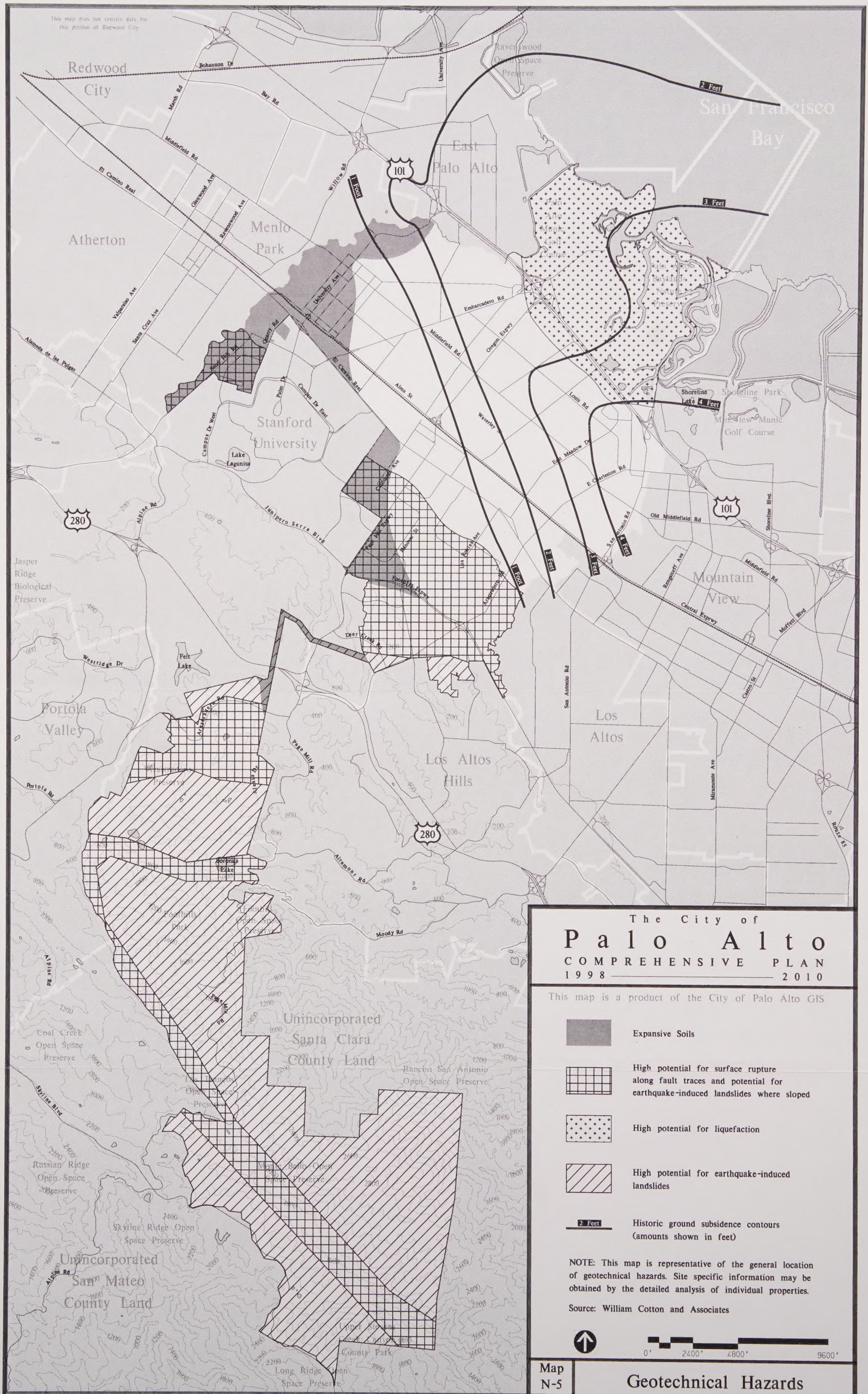

The City of Palo Alto COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

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- Expansive Soils
- High potential for surface rupture along fault traces and potential for earthquake-induced landslides where sloped
- High potential for liquefaction
- High potential for earthquake-induced landslides
- 2 Feet — Historic ground subsidence contours (amounts shown in feet)

NOTE: This map is representative of the general location of geotechnical hazards. Site specific information may be obtained by the detailed analysis of individual properties.

Source: William Cotton and Associates

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map N-5

Geotechnical Hazards

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[000000.COMPPLAN]GEOTECH.FGB View: PGEOTECH
Date: 02FEB98-11.48.40 By: DASCOMBE

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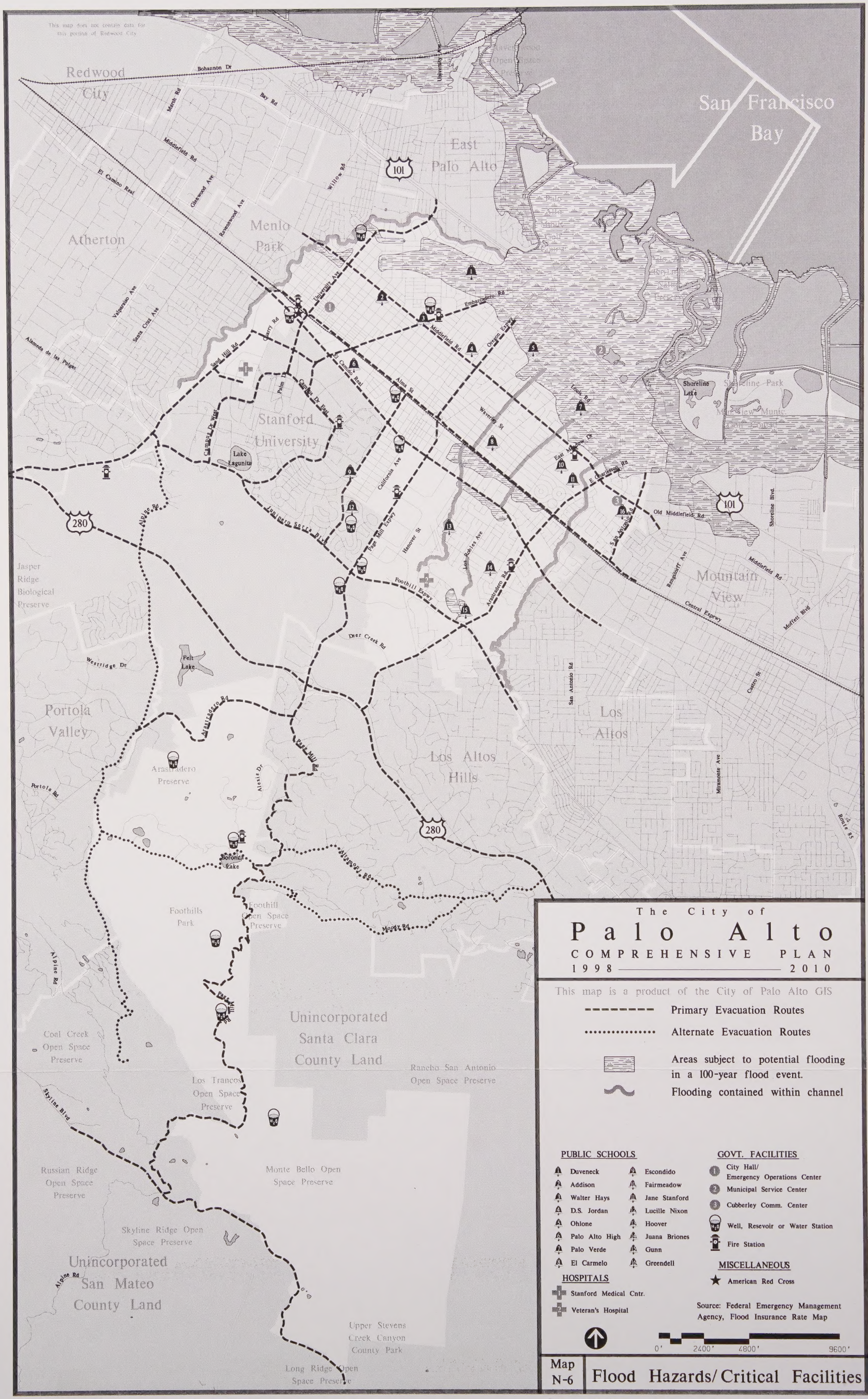

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

- Primary Evacuation Routes
- Alternate Evacuation Routes
- Areas subject to potential flooding in a 100-year flood event.
- Flooding contained within channel

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Duveneck
- Addison
- Walter Hays
- D.S. Jordan
- Ohlone
- Palo Alto High
- Palo Verde
- El Carmelo
- Escondido
- Fairmeadow
- Jane Stanford
- Lucille Nixon
- Hoover
- Juana Briones
- Gunn
- Greendell

HOSPITALS

- Stanford Medical Cntr.
- Veteran's Hospital

GOVT. FACILITIES

- City Hall/ Emergency Operations Center
- Municipal Service Center
- Cubberley Comm. Center
- Well, Resevoir or Water Station
- Fire Station

MISCELLANEOUS

- American Red Cross

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency, Flood Insurance Rate Map

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map N-6

Flood Hazards/ Critical Facilities

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[COMPPLAN]EVACU.FGB View: PEVFLOOD
Date: 02FEB98-11.54.50 By: DASCOMBE

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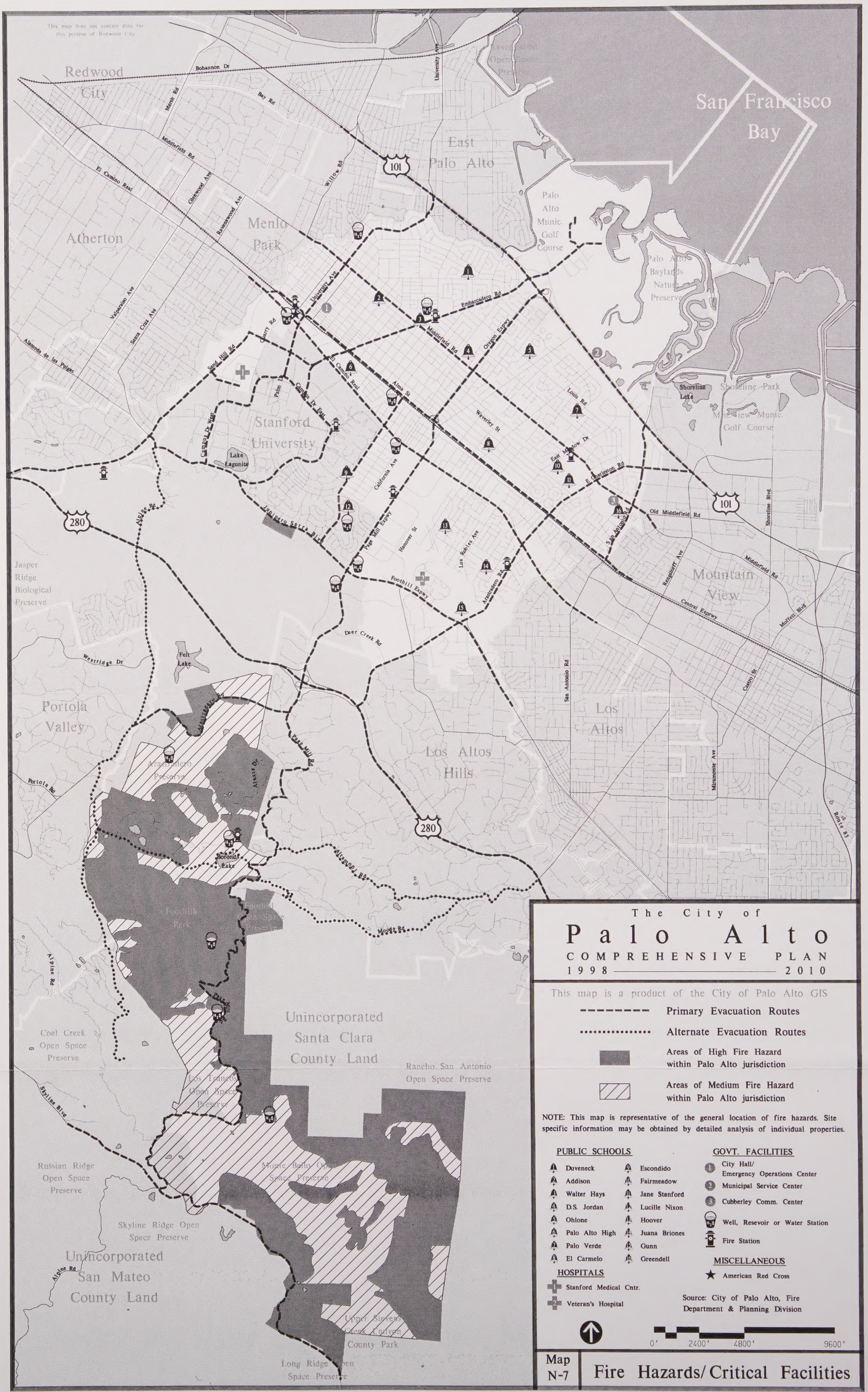

The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

- Primary Evacuation Routes
- Alternate Evacuation Routes
- Areas of High Fire Hazard within Palo Alto jurisdiction
- Areas of Medium Fire Hazard within Palo Alto jurisdiction

NOTE: This map is representative of the general location of fire hazards. Site specific information may be obtained by detailed analysis of individual properties.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Duveneck
- Addison
- Walter Hays
- D.S. Jordan
- Ohlone
- Palo Alto High
- Palo Verde
- El Carmelo
- Escondido
- Fairmeadow
- Jane Stanford
- Lucille Nixon
- Hoover
- Juana Briones
- Gunn
- Greendell

HOSPITALS

- Stanford Medical Cntr.
- Veteran's Hospital

GOVT. FACILITIES

1. City Hall/ Emergency Operations Center
2. Municipal Service Center
3. Cubberley Comm. Center
- Well, Resevoir or Water Station
- Fire Station

MISCELLANEOUS

- American Red Cross

Source: City of Palo Alto, Fire Department & Planning Division

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map N-7

Fire Hazards/ Critical Facilities

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[COMPPLAN]EVACU.FGB View: PEVFIRE
Date: 02FEB98-12.19.20 By: DASCOMBE

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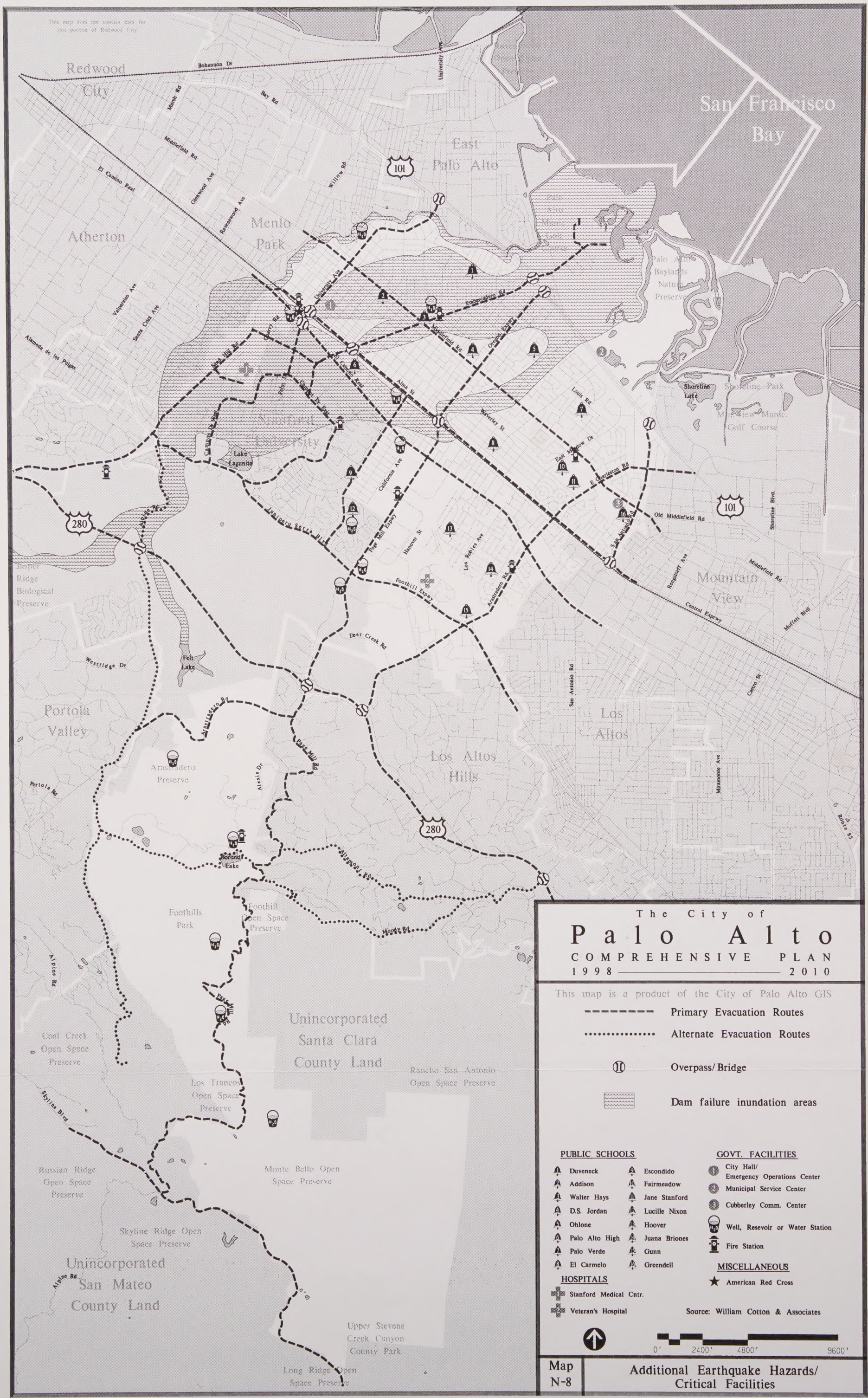
This map does not contain data for this portion of Redwood City
Redwood City
Bohannon Dr
University Ave
San Francisco Bay
East Palo Alto
Bay Rd
Marsh Rd
Middlefield Rd
El Camino Real
Glenwood Ave
Ravenswood Ave
Willow Rd
101
Menlo Park
Atherton
Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve
Embarcadero Rd
Oregon Expwy
Valparaiso Ave
Santa Cruz Ave
Alameda de las Pulgas
Sand Hill Rd
Alma St
Shoreline Lake
Shoreline Park
Mayfield
Stanford University
Lake Lagunita
Palm Dr
Campus Dr East
Campus Dr West
Junipero Serra Blvd
Page Mill Expwy
Foothill Expwy
Waverley St
Louis Rd
East Meadow Dr
El Camino Real
California Ave
Hanover St
Los Robles Ave
Arastradero Rd
Deer Creek Rd
Westridge Dr
Felt Lake
Portola Valley
Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve
280
Arastradero Preserve
Alexis Dr
Portola Rd
Page Mill Rd
Los Altos Hills
Los Altos
San Antonio Rd
Central Expwy
Moffett Blvd
Shoreline Blvd
Old Middlefield Rd
Rengstorff Ave
Mountain View
Miramonte Ave
Castro St
Route 85
Foothills Park
Foothill Open Space Preserve
Alpine Rd
Page Mill Rd
Alpine Rd
Skyline Blvd
Coal Creek Open Space Preserve
Unincorporated Santa Clara County Land
Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve
Los Trancos Open Space Preserve
Monte Bello Open Space Preserve
Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve
Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve
Unincorporated San Mateo County Land
Upper Stevens Creek Canyon County Park
Long Ridge Open Space Preserve
Moody Rd
Alpine Rd
Page Mill Rd
Arastradero Rd
Foothill Expwy
Deer Creek Rd
Westridge Dr
Felt Lake
Portola Valley
Arastradero Preserve
Alexis Dr
Portola Rd
Page Mill Rd
Los Altos Hills
Los Altos
San Antonio Rd
Central Expwy
Moffett Blvd
Shoreline Blvd
Old Middlefield Rd
Rengstorff Ave
Mountain View
Miramonte Ave
Castro St
Route 85
Foothills Park
Foothill Open Space Preserve
Alpine Rd
Page Mill Rd
Alpine Rd
Skyline Blvd
Coal Creek Open Space Preserve
Unincorporated Santa Clara County Land
Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve
Los Trancos Open Space Preserve
Monte Bello Open Space Preserve
Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve
Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve
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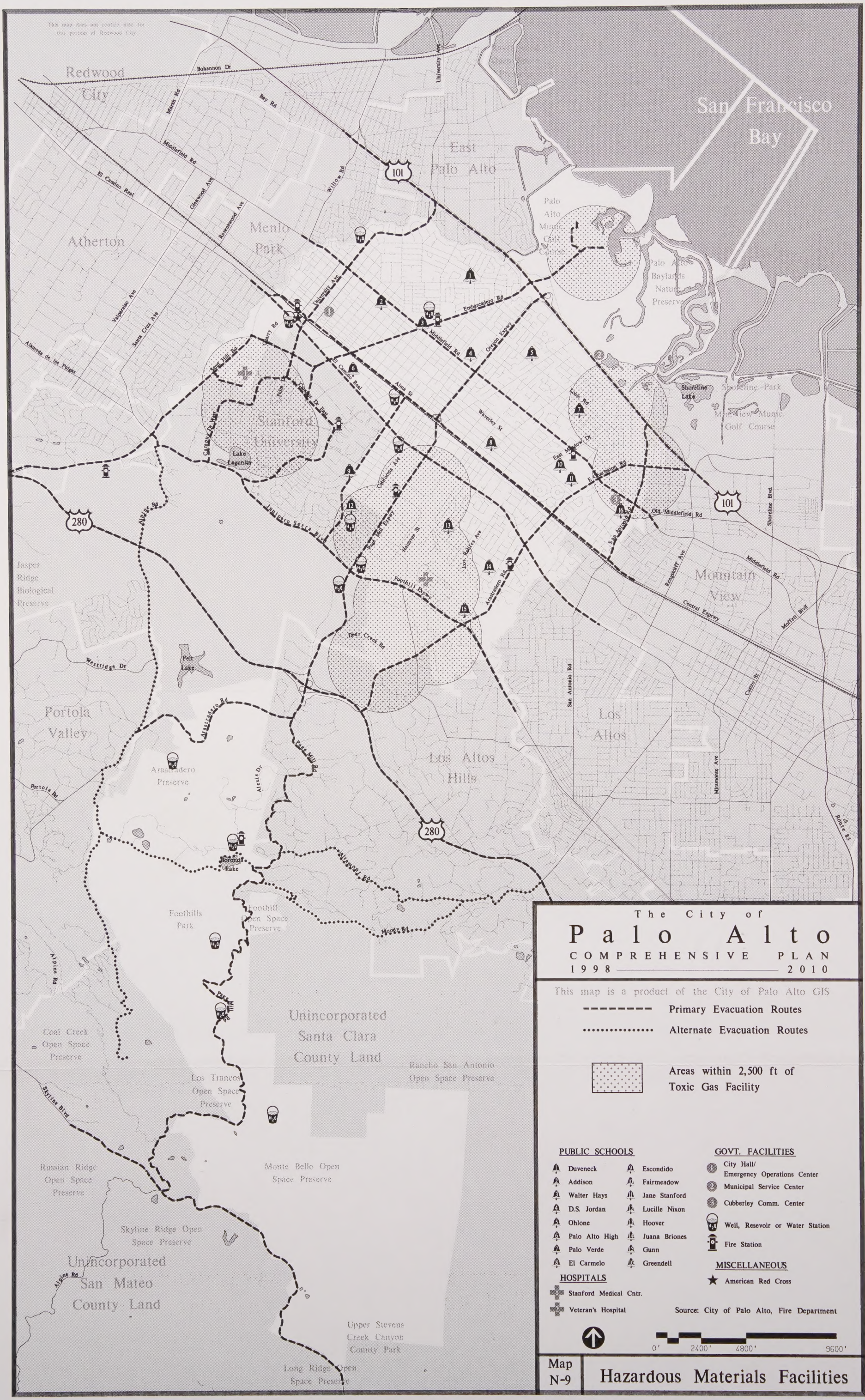
Moody Rd
Embarcadero Rd
Oregon Expwy
Junipero Serra Blvd
Page Mill Expwy
Foothill Expwy
Arastradero Rd
Deer Creek Rd
Waverley St
Louis Rd
East Meadow Dr
El Camino Real
California Ave
Hanover St
Los Robles Ave
Alma St
Shoreline Lake
Shoreline Park
Mayfield
Stanford University
Lake Lagunita
Palm Dr
Campus Dr East
Campus Dr West
Junipero Serra Blvd
Page Mill Expwy
Foothill Expwy
Waverley St
Louis Rd
East Meadow Dr
El Camino Real
California Ave
Hanover St
Los Robles Ave
Arastradero Rd
Deer Creek Rd
Westridge Dr
Felt Lake
Portola Valley
Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve
280



The City of Palo Alto
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

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Primary Evacuation Routes

Alternate Evacuation Routes

Areas within 2,500 ft of Toxic Gas Facility

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Duveneck
- Addison
- Walter Hays
- D.S. Jordan
- Ohlone
- Palo Alto High
- Palo Verde
- El Carmelo
- Escondido
- Fairmeadow
- Jane Stanford
- Lucille Nixon
- Hoover
- Juana Briones
- Gunn
- Greendell

HOSPITALS

- Stanford Medical Cntr.
- Veteran's Hospital

GOVT. FACILITIES

- City Hall/ Emergency Operations Center
- Municipal Service Center
- Cubberley Comm. Center
- Well, Resevoir or Water Station
- Fire Station

MISCELLANEOUS

- American Red Cross

Source: City of Palo Alto, Fire Department

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map N-9

Hazardous Materials Facilities

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[COMPPLAN]EVACU.FGB View: PEVHAZ
Date: 02FEB98-12.25.40 By: DASCOMBE

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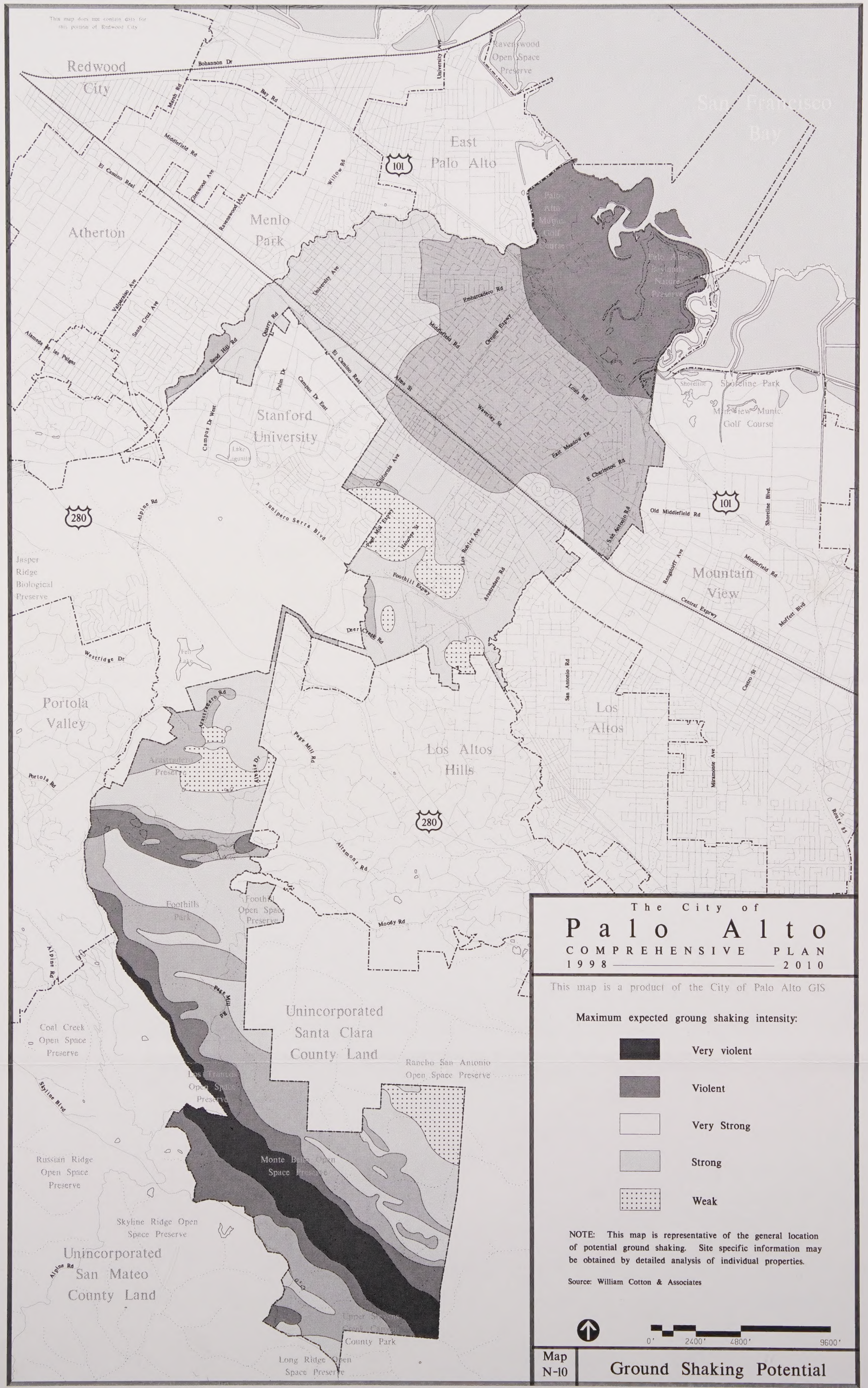

The City of Palo Alto
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

Maximum expected groung shaking intensity:

- Very violent
- Violent
- Very Strong
- Strong
- Weak

NOTE: This map is representative of the general location of potential ground shaking. Site specific information may be obtained by detailed analysis of individual properties.

Source: William Cotton & Associates

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map N-10

Ground Shaking Potential

File: PL_PROJ_DISK:[000000.COMPPLAN]SHAKE.FGB View: PSHAKE
Date: 02FEB98-12.32.50 By: DASCOMBE

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6 Community Services and Facilities

Vision Statement

Palo Alto will provide high quality community services to its residents, businesses, and visitors. Its schools, libraries, parks, community facilities, and performing arts and cultural centers are treasured and will be enhanced to serve current and future generations. Its police and fire services will be managed to provide consistently high levels of public safety. The City will continue to provide services and programs that meet the needs of special populations—including children, seniors, and people with disabilities—as well as programs in recreation, lifelong learning, and the arts that benefit all populations. Palo Alto's success in providing these services will be expressed and measured by the satisfaction of its customers, the public at large. The City will pursue new ways to deliver community services in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible. It will coordinate its efforts with other public agencies, non-profits, and the private sector to reduce overlap and maximize the use of resources.

Introduction

The Community Services and Facilities Element is not explicitly required by State law; however, the topics addressed here are an integral part of the City's overall planning strategy and a basic consideration in setting growth and development policy. This Element emphasizes the importance of providing responsive, efficient, and cost-effective community services. It acknowledges the vital role that public facilities like parks and schools play in shaping community life. The Element describes how the City will meet the needs of groups with special needs, how it will maintain its physical facilities, and how it will provide educational, recreational, and cultural services to a population with ever changing needs and demands.

The Element includes a Background section that profiles schools, libraries, parks, police, and fire services in Palo Alto and briefly describes the City's service provisions for young children, seniors, and persons with disabilities. It proceeds with goals, policies, and programs that address how these facilities and services will be provided in the future. City policy related to solid waste collection, energy, water supply, storm water, and emergency management services can be found in the Natural Environment Element.

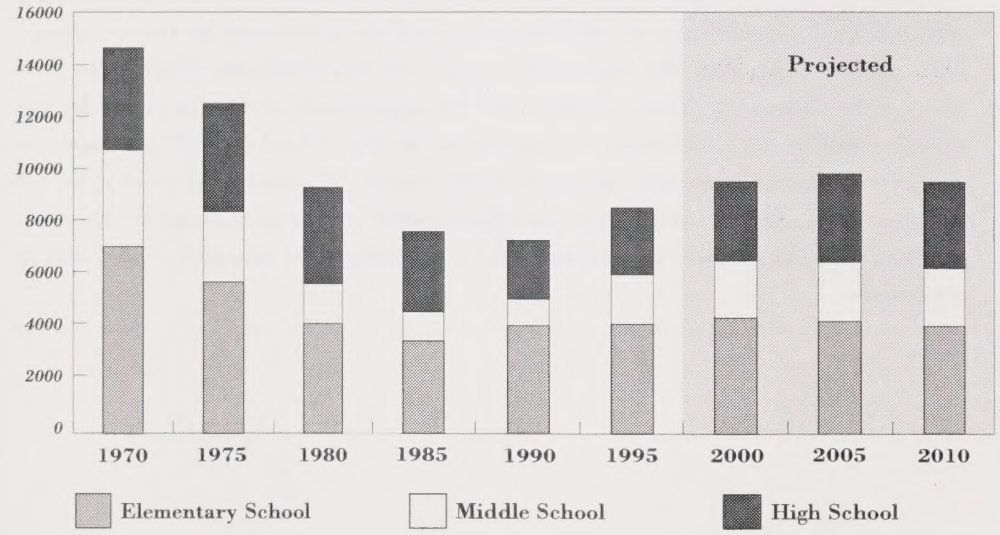
See Map C-1 for community facilitiy locations

Background

SCHOOLS

Palo Alto's public schools are operated by the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD). PAUSD operates one preschool, eleven K-5 elementary schools, two 6-8 middle schools, two 9-12 high schools, a continuation school, a self-supporting adult school, the Children's Hospital School at Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital, and a summer school. The elementary, middle, and high schools had a combined enrollment of approximately 9,200 in 1996. PAUSD serves students in Palo Alto, Stanford, and part of Los Altos Hills. It also serves over 300 students in the Ravenswood School District in San Mateo County through a Volunteer Transfer Program and over 100 students from other communities through a State provision that allows parents to enroll their children in the district where they work. PAUSD currently has a substantial over-enrollment problem. Projected enrollment increases would exacerbate the existing over-enrollment problem, should capacity remain constant.

PAUSD Historic and Projected Enrollment



Source: 1990-1996 enrollment provided by PAUSD Admissions Office. September 1990-1995 enrollments are 11th day enrollments; 1997-1010 forecasted enrollments provided by Lapkoff & Gobalet Demographics Research, Inc. Forecasts are for October enrollments.

School enrollment in Palo Alto peaked prior to 1970, declined in the 1980s, and has been rising again in the 1990s.

Capacity vs. Enrollment

	1997 Capacity[1]	1997 Enrollment	2010 Projected Enrollment
Elementary School	4,077[2]	4,406[2]	4,200
Middle School	2,359	2,087	2,258
High School	2,869	2,842	3,346
Totals	**9,305**	**9,335**	**9,804**

1 - Capacity figures do not include school facilities currently leased to other users
2 - 1996

The "new wave" of increased enrollment is expected to peak between 2003 and 2007, beginning at the elementary school level.

LIBRARIES

Palo Alto's public library system is comprised of six libraries: Main, Children's, Downtown, College Terrace, Mitchell Park, and Terman Park. The City has one of the highest library item per capita circulation rates in the nation with over one million volumes loaned in 1996-7 and some 900,000 people using the libraries annually. The Main Library houses the Palo Alto Historical Association Collection.

Access to library collections and information is provided through a variety of computer-based services, including the Internet and an automated catalog. The latter is available from remote locations 24 hours a day. The Mitchell Park Branch is equipped with a variety of equipment to serve persons with disabilities. There are also weekly and special event programs for children, ranging from toddlers to middle school ages. Library revenues are supplemented through a variety of fund-raising activities orchestrated by the Friends of the Palo Alto Public Library.

For more information, log on to the City of Palo Alto website, library page: www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/palo/city/library

Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Human Services Division

Public libraries across the country are grappling with unprecedented change caused by the emergence of the Information Age and the significant social and economic forces impacting the ways people live their lives. These changes are affecting library collection formats and how information is transmitted and received. The Palo Alto library system is adopting a strategic plan to place the library in a position to respond to the new challenges. The major components to the plan include the adaptation of services to accommodate technology and diverse needs, and improvements to the aesthetics of the buildings to increase their appeal as community gathering spaces.

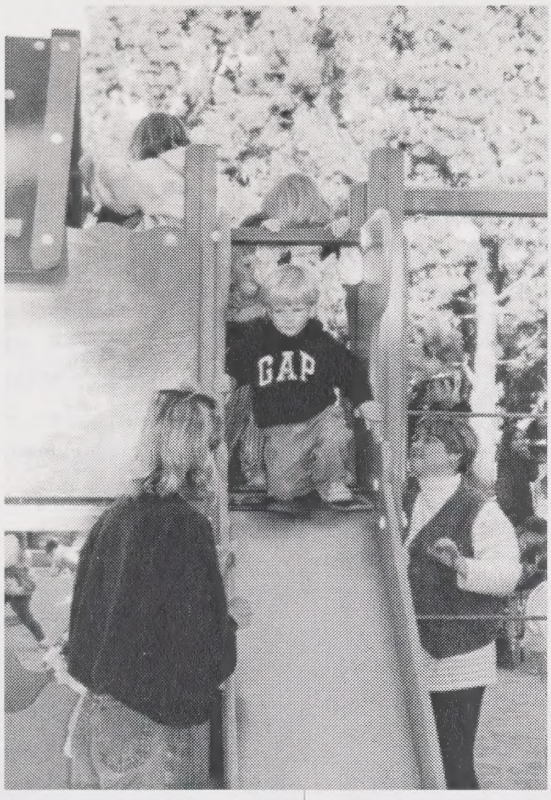


Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Recreation Division

PARKS

The City owns and operates 29 neighborhood and district parks that total approximately 190 acres. They include ten "mini-parks" that range in size from one-half acre to two acres. These parks generally include small playgrounds for children and/or grass and landscape areas for playing or sitting. Most of the other parks are "neighborhood" parks and provide a mix of active and passive recreational areas. There are also three "district" parks that serve larger areas and contain a wider range of facilities. The district parks provide playing fields, picnic grounds, and community centers.

The City also owns and operates several large open space preserves such as Byxbee Park and Foothills Park. These are described in the Natural Environment Element. Because of the "built-out" nature of the community, it is unlikely that many new parks will be created in Palo Alto. Maintenance and rehabilitation of existing facilities will continue to be the City's primary concern relating to parks.

See Map C-2 for park locations

RECREATION SERVICES

The City of Palo Alto Recreation Division takes great pride in its presentation of diverse and high quality programs. These programs include youth and adult sports, teen and middle school activities, after school programs, a variety of classes for all ages, and a wide range of special events. Recreation facilities include the Cubberley, Lucie Stern, Mitchell Park, Ventura, and Terman Community Centers; Rinconcada Pool; and a teen center. In 1996, the Cubberley Center was host to over 500,000 people. The Center offers a wide range of classes, activities, sports facilities, and special events. Ventura Community Center houses a police substation as well as administrative offices for Palo Alto Community Child Care, several child care centers, and other nonprofit groups. The Terman Community Center hosts a variety of nonprofit groups and includes a branch library and community meeting room.

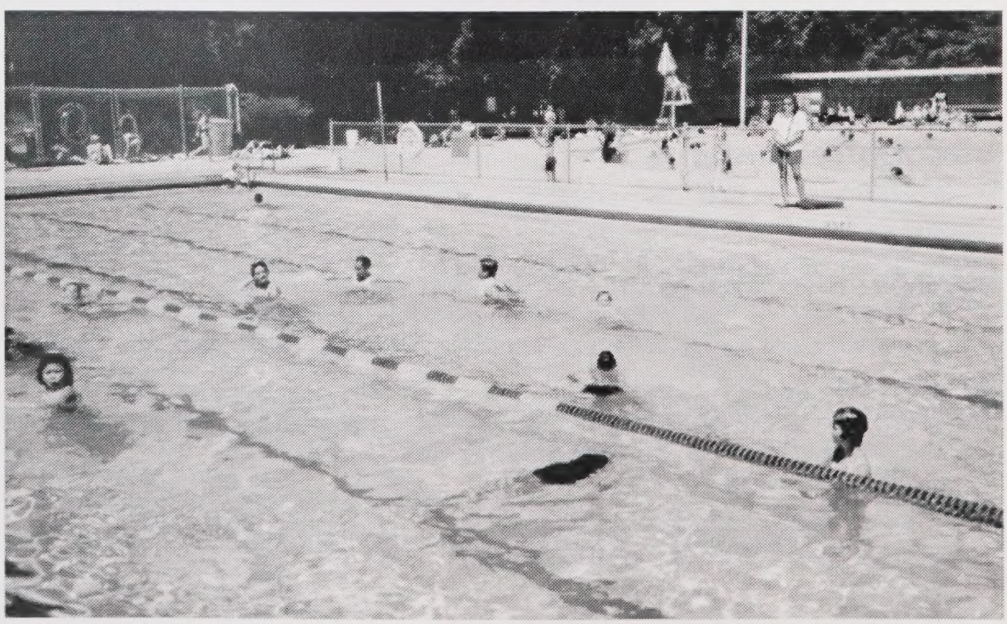


Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Recreation Division

POLICE

Law enforcement services are provided by the Palo Alto Police Department, located adjacent to City Hall and in a substation in the Ventura neighborhood opened in 1996. In 1995, Palo Alto had approximately 40 crimes per 1,000 residents, a rate very close to the rate for Santa Clara County as a whole and other similarly sized communities such as Mountain View. The Department had 173 employees in 1997, with 100 sworn officers including reserves. It shares Special Weapons and Tactical (SWAT) Teams with the cities of Los Altos and Mountain View and provides dispatching to the Stanford University Police through the City's Communications Center. The City provides animal services, including a Spay and Neuter Clinic and pet adoption program, and contracts with Mountain View, Los Altos, and Los Altos Hills to provide emergency and State-mandated animal control services. A key challenge for the Department over the life of the Comprehensive Plan includes implementation of the community policing program, a philosophy that is intended to get the community involved in problem solving relating to police protection and crime prevention. Other challenges for the future include the potential increase in white collar crime, and the continued need for interagency cooperation.

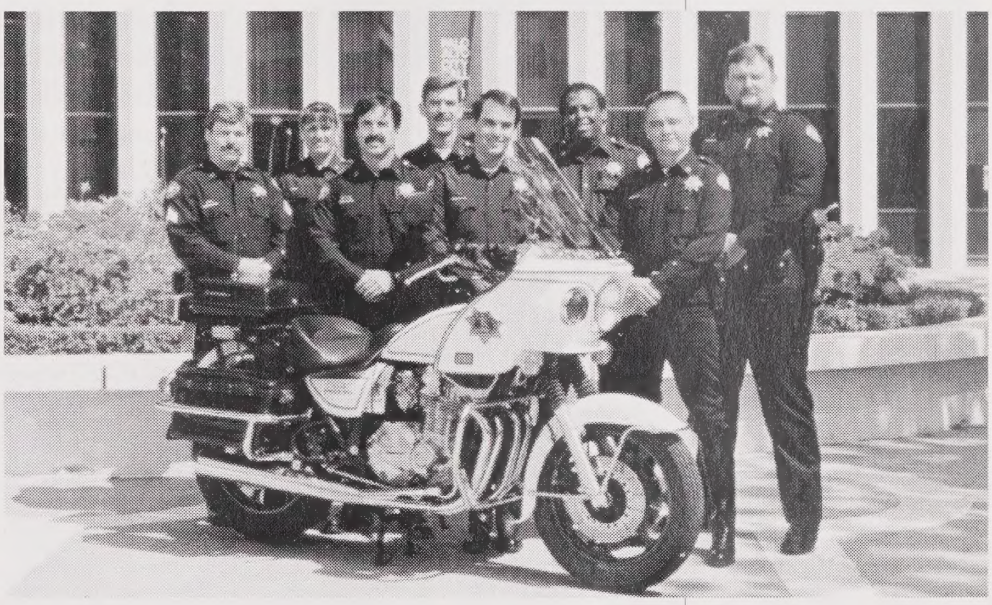


Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Police Department

FIRE

Fire protection services are provided by the Palo Alto Fire Department. The Department operates eight fire stations around the City and on the Stanford campus. In 1997, the Department had 123 personnel, including 116 sworn or uniformed positions. The City has mutual aid agreements with Menlo Park, Mountain View, Los Altos, and Woodside. Emergency medical services provided by the Fire Department include the Bicycle Response Team.

Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Fire Department

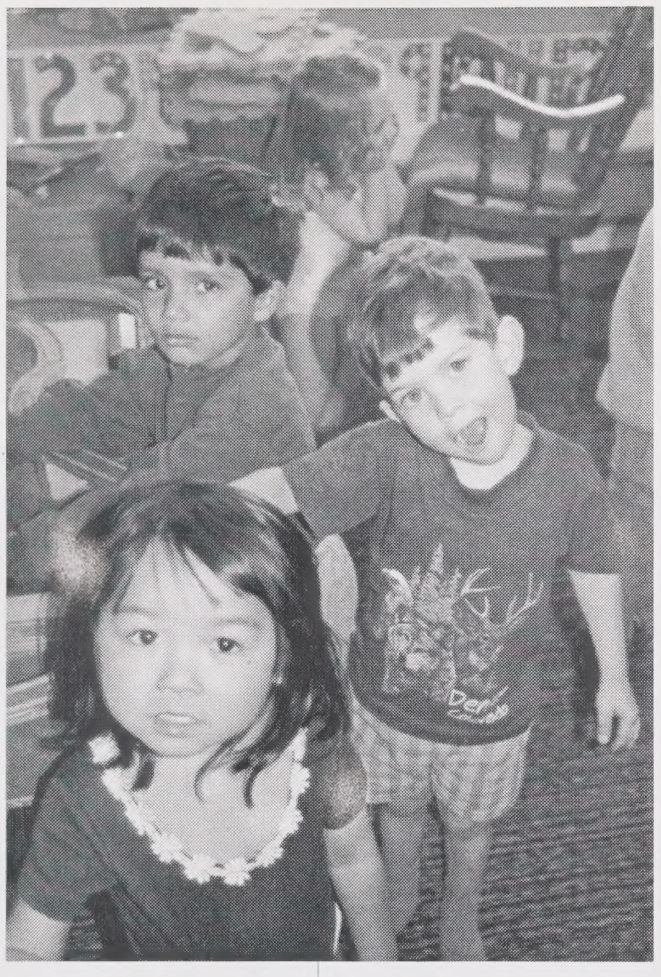


Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Human Services Division

Child Care

There are approximately 83 licensed child care facilities in the City of Palo Alto, including 51 center-based operations and 32 in-home operations. The center-based operations include 15 that offer infant/toddler care, 34 that offer preschool care, and 17 that offer school-age care. The combined capacity of these 51 facilities is 3,407 children, with many centers offering care for more than one age group. The center-based child care centers are operating at or near capacity. In 1997, there was a waiting list of over 1,000 children, most at the infant and preschool levels.

The City's Department of Community Services, through a partnership with the PAUSD, administers contracts for after school child care at each of Palo Alto's eleven elementary schools. In 1990, these programs served a combined total of 395 children. By 1997, most of the programs had increased their capacities to serve a combined total of over 800 children.

The City of Palo Alto also funds a program that provides a subsidy for child care expenses to qualifying low income households. It is administered through the Palo Alto Community Child Care (PACCC) organization, a private group that operates several center-based facilities in Palo Alto. This subsidy can be used at PACCC-run facilities or at other child care centers. The City has a Child Care Advisory Committee that advises the City Manager on child care issues.

From the late 1980s and through the late 1990s, Palo Alto experienced an increased demand for quality child care services. These increases can be attributed to an increasing number of women in the workforce, and the increase in the number of families with children. As transportation and traffic issues demand more comprehensive solutions, the provision of child care close to homes and/or work places will emerge as one of the components of a multi-faceted program to reduce traffic congestion. The challenge that lies ahead is ensuring an adequate supply of quality child care to meet the growing demand. One method to increase the supply of child care includes the evaluation of proposed development projects for their impact on child care demand, and the encouragement of the provision of onsite child care services.

Senior Services

Services are provided to seniors by the Senior Coordinating Council of the Palo Alto Area. This nonprofit organization offers a broad range of services supporting independent living, education, and enrichment. Programs include transportation, housing, counseling services, social work, support groups, health screenings and lectures, adult day health care, home fix-it repair, and referral services. Programs in the City also include the Senior Day Health Program and the Senior Home Repair Service. The Palo Alto Senior Center provides a central facility for the delivery of these services, as well as a social center for seniors. Palo Alto has, and is projected to continue to have, a higher percentage of persons over 60 years of age compared to other communities and, therefore, has a greater demand for senior services. As the primary provider of senior services in the City, the Senior Coordinating Council will continue to update its services based on data from market research of the needs of seniors in Palo Alto.

Services for People with Disabilities

Services to people with disabilities are administered by the City's Community Services Department with guidance provided by the Palo Alto Human Relations Commission. The Commission recruits service providers and programs serving residents with disabilities and makes funding recommendations to the City Council. Organizations receiving City funding for 1996/1997 include the Community Association for Rehabilitation providing educational and recreational services to people with disabilities, and the Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired providing rehabilitative services for low-income residents disabled by loss of sight. Additional activities for disabled persons, including an aquatics program, are provided by the City Recreation Division. The City's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) coordinator is the Chief Building Official in the Department of Planning and Community Environment. The primary challenge for the City in the area of providing services to disabled persons is the implementation of the Compliance Plan required by the ADA. This plan identifies all of the public access projects necessary for the City to comply with the Act.

Cultural Arts

The mission of the City's Arts and Culture Division is to establish an environment conducive to the growth and understanding of the arts. Programs and services offered by this division of City government include an art exhibition and museum education program, performances for and by children, a related education outreach program offered to the Palo Alto Unified School District, adult theater and opera productions, classes in visual and performing arts, and music and dance concerts. The City also has a Public Art Program and a Public Art Commission. Private community organizations supporting the arts include the Standing Committee for the Arts and Culture, Friends of the Children's Theater, Cultural Center Guild, and Council for the Palo Alto Arts. Additional cultural facilities include the Children's Theater, the Community Theater (home of TheatreWorks, the Palo Alto Players, and the West Bay Opera) at the Lucie Stern Community Center, the Art Center, and the Cubberley Center, which contains a theater and studios for resident artists.

Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Arts and Culture Division

Efficient Service Delivery

Goal C-1: Effective and Efficient Delivery of Community Services.

Delivering high quality City services with finite fiscal resources requires efficiency and coordination, along with a recognition of changing community needs. Demand for services like child and senior care, education, and recreation continue to grow and change. Technology has revolutionized the way many services are provided, but has also added a new level of complexity. At the same time, the service delivery system itself has changed. Services that were once exclusively provided by the City may now be provided by another public entity or by a nonprofit agency or private company. The result of this trend has been a growing emphasis on partnership and coordination. The only way to achieve maximum efficiency in City service delivery is to collaborate with other jurisdictions, avoid duplication of efforts, build coalitions with the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD), and enlist the assistance of businesses and volunteers to supplement City resources.

Photo courtesy of the City of Palo Alto Human Services Division

The annual May Fete parade is the happy result of a cooperative effort between the Palo Alto Recreation Foundation, the Palo Alto Weekly, and the Downtown Marketing Association.

Policy C-1:

Encourage the creation of partnerships within the Mid-Peninsula or the greater Bay Area to seek effective solutions to shared problems and community service needs.

Policy C-2:

Where economies of scale are possible, cooperate with neighboring communities in providing municipal services such as police and fire protection, libraries, and recreation.

The City already takes advantage of these opportunities in the provision of police, fire, solid waste, and recycling services. Additional opportunities may be available for these and other types of services, particularly through coordination with Stanford University and the City of East Palo Alto.

POLICY C-3:

Palo Alto should continue to take a leadership role in addressing community service issues that cross jurisdictional lines.

Palo Alto has been recognized as a national leader in the delivery of community services. The City is committed to continuing this leadership role in the future.

See also Program N-21

POLICY C-4:

Maintain a close, collaborative relationship with the PAUSD to maximize the use of school services and facilities for public benefit, particularly for young people, families, and seniors.

See also Program L-68

In the past, school facilities have not been available for non-school uses due to insurance requirements, liability concerns, maintenance costs, and other issues. The City is committed to working with PAUSD to change this situation and increase the number and type of school facilities available for community use.

PROGRAM C-1:

In cooperation with existing public and private agencies and PAUSD, develop a service program that will coordinate the efforts of agencies providing services to families and youth in Palo Alto.

The Children and Family Services Program would reinforce the message that education begins at home and that parental participation in supervising homework and other school activities is a critical component of the education process.

PROGRAM C-2:

Continue to use the City/School liaison committee to remove barriers to community use of schools and facilities and coordinate other areas of mutual interest.

The City/School Liaison Committee consists of two School Board Members and two City Council members. The Committee meets regularly to identify and address issues of mutual interest to the City and PAUSD.

PROGRAM C-3:

Assess the potential for City use of PAUSD facilities for child care, libraries, recreational facilities, community meeting space, education, health care, culture, and computer resources.

PROGRAM C-4:

Work with PAUSD to determine ways that schools can be made more available to the community for weekend and evening use.

PROGRAM C-5:

Consider joint provision of library services with PAUSD.

POLICY C-5:

Recognize the importance of schools to the social and economic vitality of the City.

POLICY C-6:

Continue and enhance City efforts to assist PAUSD in anticipating and addressing land development-related school enrollment impacts.

PROGRAM C-6:

Provide regular status reports to PAUSD on potential and approved development projects.

PROGRAM C-7:

Require an assessment of school impacts prior to the approval of development projects that require legislative acts, including general plan amendments and zoning changes.

See also Policy L-65

POLICY C-7:

Actively work with private, nonprofit, and public community service organizations to avoid duplication and to coordinate the delivery of services like child care, senior services, and recreation.

POLICY C-8:

Welcome and encourage corporate citizenship in the provision of community services.

Photo courtesy of Terry Pimsleur & Company

The summer street fair on University Avenue is the cooperative effort of merchants, residents, and government and is enjoyed by over 200,000 people annually.

Corporate citizenship refers to the active participation of local business in community affairs. It reflects an acknowledgment by the business community that they too are members of the community and have a responsibility in making it a better place to live and work. Corporate citizenship has always played an important role in Palo Alto community life and businesses continue to sponsor programs that enrich the lives of residents. These programs include the annual Black and White Ball, the May Fete Parade, the Downtown Street Fair, and others.

PROGRAM C-8:

Establish a program to facilitate continuing corporate support for community services through contributions of funds, time, materials, and expertise.

GOAL C-2: A Commitment to Excellence and High Quality Customer Service Among City of Palo Alto Officials and Employees.

See also Goal G-6 and associated policy and programs

The City of Palo Alto is committed to providing high quality, responsive customer service for its residents and businesses. This priority is reflected in policies and programs throughout this document. The policies and programs below more specifically address the City's intentions to reinforce the customer-service ethic. Changes in City staff management techniques, performance review criteria, and public service processes are proposed to improve the quality of service delivery.

POLICY C-9:

Deliver City services in a manner that creates and reinforces positive relationships among City employees, residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

PROGRAM C-9:

Establish performance review criteria for City employees that consider the quality of customer service provided.

PROGRAM C-10:

Establish tangible incentives and enhance rewards and recognition programs to encourage City staff to deliver high quality services.

Some aspects of this program may require negotiations with the City's labor unions to achieve criteria and incentives that are workable and mutually acceptable.

POLICY C-10:

Perform customer-oriented evaluations of City service delivery and develop strategies for improving customer service.

PROGRAM C-11:

Continue to budget for City staff training in customer service-oriented management techniques.

Several management philosophies stress customer satisfaction as a measure of success. Such philosophies use performance data as a way of identifying problems and encourage the participation of employees in solving these problems.

PROGRAM C-12:

Encourage City work groups to examine and improve operating procedures.

GOAL C-3: Improved Quality, Quantity, and Affordability of Social Services, Particularly for Children, Youth, Seniors, and People with Disabilities

Services for children, youth, seniors, and persons with disabilities are constrained by limited resources. Coordination among the many agencies and organizations serving these populations is critical to stretch these resources as far as possible. At a time when the number of children and seniors is increasing, it is essential to develop long-term and short-term strategies to deliver the comprehensive package of services needed by these groups.

Photo courtesy of the Peninsula Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired

The Peninsula Center for the Blind & Visually Impaired is one of many special service organizations in Palo Alto. Here an instructor from the center gives a lesson in mobility. Since the date of the photo, the city has installed an audible signal at this as well as two other intersections.

See Map C-3 for locations of licensed child care facilities in Palo Alto

For more information, log on to the City of Palo Alto website, child care and education page: www.city.palo-alto.ca.us/palo/city/education

POLICY C-11

Support and promote the provision of comprehensive child care services in Palo Alto by public and private providers, including employers.

The supply of child care facilities in Palo Alto has not kept pace with demand. As the number of children and working mothers in Palo Alto increases, the demand for convenient, high quality child care will continue to grow. New residential development in the City and continued changes in demographics may make the existing shortage of facilities even worse in the future. Coordination with PAUSD, new child care services, and child care provisions within new development will become more imperative.

PROGRAM C-13:

Use the Child Care Master Plan to guide the delivery of child care services. Update and amend this Plan to include standards for evaluating the impacts of new development on child care service needs.

PROGRAM C-14:

Work with the Child Care Advisory Committee to evaluate the feasibility of requiring child care impact assessments for proposed development projects.

POLICY C-12:

Coordinate delivery of child care services with other service providers, including the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD).

The City leases space and provides administrative oversight for the school age child care programs located at each of PAUSD's elementary schools. In 1997, these 11 programs served a combined total of 805 children.

POLICY C-13:

Continue strong support for and long-term commitment to school age child care programs on PAUSD sites.

POLICY C-14:

Encourage inter-generational interaction in providing solutions to child care needs.

POLICY C-15:

In residential or neighborhood commercial development projects, strongly encourage child care and/or senior care facilities, along with measures to mitigate potential conflicts between these facilities and surrounding uses.

PROGRAM C-15:

Study changes in zoning, parking, and landscaping requirements that would facilitate the development of neighborhood child and/or senior care facilities.

PROGRAM C-16:

Create development incentives (such as increased floor area ratio or reduced parking requirements) for employers or developers who include child and/or senior care facilities in the design of new housing and commercial buildings.

PROGRAM C-17:

Facilitate the application process for proposed child and/or senior care centers. Work with applicants or potential applicants to identify appropriate locations for such centers.

POLICY C-16:

Identify existing or potential locations for child and/or senior care in public facilities and actively promote the establishment of such facilities.

POLICY C-17:

Continue to support provision, funding, and promotion of services and programs for children and youth (e.g., those offered at the teen center).

PROGRAM C-18:

Encourage the continuation and development of after-school and evening programs for children and youth. Maximize participation in such programs by increasing the number of locations where the programs are provided and by supporting transportation options to these locations.

POLICY C-18:

Support and promote the provision of comprehensive senior services in coordination with senior service providers.

Approximately 20 percent of the population is over 60, and this percentage is expected to increase even more during the next 15 years. The continued growth of the senior population will increase the demand for a broad range of social services. Palo Alto can directly assist in meeting these needs by providing new City services and facilities. It can also indirectly assist by facilitating service provision by other parties. This could include changes to the Zoning Ordinance that accommodate senior care and senior service centers, City staff participation in the planning of such facilities, and cooperation by the City with other service providers to ensure comprehensive service coverage.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

Provision of services and facilities for Palo Alto seniors continues to be a priority.

Photo courtesy of the Senior Coordinating Council of the Palo Alto Area

See also Goal T-7 and associated policies and programs on special transportation needs

POLICY C-19:

Continue to support provision, funding, or promotion of services for persons with disabilities through the Human Relations Commission, the Parks and Recreation Division, and other City departments. Support rigorous compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The ADA is implemented under the supervision of the City's Chief Building Official. Implementation of this Act over the last several years has resulted in a redesign of many civic facilities and services and will continue to be an important element in the future design of public and private buildings and programs.

See also Policies H-19, H-20, and H-21, and Programs H-30 and H-31 in the Housing Element

POLICY C-20:

Support and promote services addressing the needs of the unhoused community.

GOAL C-4: Attractive, Well-maintained Community Facilities That Serve Palo Alto Residents.

Palo Alto's parks, community centers, libraries, and other civic buildings are an important part of what makes the City a desirable place to live. The City is committed to continued investment in its infrastructure and public facilities, as resources are available. This commitment requires a strong emphasis on maintenance, rehabilitation, and modernization. Retrofitting existing facilities to incorporate new technology is important to ensure that these facilities remain useful. The City is also committed to providing new facilities in areas that are under-served, and in areas where change is expected in the future. New parks, plazas, and community facilities will help the City sustain its position as a model for public service delivery.

POLICY C-21:

Where appropriate, maintain existing community facilities in public ownership to prevent potential shortages in the future.

The City is committed to retaining underutilized City facilities rather than selling them as surplus properties. This is intended to prevent potential shortages of such facilities in the future when the community's needs may be greater or different than they are now.

The facilities at Mitchell Park provide opportunities for a variety of uses and user groups.

POLICY C-22:

Design and construct new community facilities to have flexible functions to ensure adaptability to the changing needs of the community.

New facilities should be designed to allow for changing community needs. Flexibility is essential, both in the initial layout of the space and in its on-going use. The pressure to use community facilities in more varied and intense ways may translate into requests for longer operating hours, more diverse programs, and more frequent activities. Such demands will require better coordination of services, modification and expansion of facilities to allow more users, program changes (and associated changes in space requirements), and higher maintenance costs.

POLICY C-23:

Explore ways to expand the space available in the community for art exhibits, classes and other cultural activities.

Consider expansion of the Art Center to provide space for more classes and exhibits, and investigate possible sites for Art Center annexes. Look for opportunities to adapt existing buildings and to make provision in new facilities for art exhibition space.

POLICY C-24:

Reinvest in aging facilities to improve their usefulness and appearance. Avoid deferred maintenance of City infrastructure.

Palo Alto is committed to the maintenance of its facilities to maximize their potential life and avoid the costly effects of deferred maintenance. In addition, the City is committed to on-going improvements that make facilities more welcoming to the public. These improvements, such as those completed at Civic Center Plaza and in the lobby at City Hall, could allow public buildings and spaces to truly function as "community centers." Reinvestment could include modernization of existing facilities to add computer systems, electronic communication equipment, and other changes that improve access to services and increase operating efficiency.

PROGRAM C-19:

Develop improvement plans for the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of community facilities, and keep these facilities viable community assets by investing the necessary resources.

Examples of such plans include the Infrastructure Plan, the Palo Alto Municipal Golf Course Master Improvement Plan, and the Cubberley Master Plan.

PROGRAM C-20:

Conduct comprehensive analyses of long-term infrastructure replacement requirements and costs.

PROGRAM C-21:

Incorporate as an additional criterion used in prioritizing sidewalk repairs, a standard related to the level of pedestrian usage.

PROGRAM C-22:

Assess the development of a performing arts center as an asset to the community and local economy.

The City's existing performing arts facilities are dated and would be difficult to retrofit to meet today's standards. The City could consider a joint venture with Stanford University to construct a contemporary state-of-the-art performing arts center. This partnership would allow the cost of the facility to be shared and would maximize its potential use. Such a center should also include exhibition space.

See also Programs N-2 and N-3 in the Natural Environment Element

POLICY C-25:

Make infrastructure improvements on public open space only when these improvements are consistent with the goals of protecting and conserving the natural environment.

POLICY C-26:

Maintain and enhance existing park facilities.

Most of Palo Alto's parks are used more heavily now than they were 10 years ago. The increase can be attributed to a number of factors, including an increase in women's and girl's sports programs, regional population growth, and larger participation in recreational activities. Meanwhile, playground acreage in Palo Alto actually decreased during the last 15 years as surplus school properties were sold and redeveloped. Increased use has taken a toll on park facilities, leaving many parks with signs of deferred maintenance. In some parks, landscaping and irrigation improvements are needed and park "furniture" is worn and in need of replacement.

PROGRAM C-23:

Study and recommend methods of private and public financing for improved park maintenance, rehabilitation, and construction.

PROGRAM C-24:

Preserve El Camino Park as a recreational resource for the community.

El Camino Park is owned by Stanford University and is leased by the City through June 2033.

POLICY C-27:

Seek opportunities to develop new parks and recreation facilities to meet the growing needs of residents and employees of Palo Alto.

PROGRAM C-25:

Consider potential park sites when preparing coordinated area plans.

PROGRAM C-26:

In conjunction with new development proposals, pursue creation of park, plaza, or other public gathering places that meet neighborhood needs.

POLICY C-28:

Use National Recreation and Park Association Standards as guidelines for locating and developing new parks. These guidelines are as follows:

- **Neighborhood parks should be at least two acres in size, although sites as small as one-half acre may be needed as supplementary facilities. The maximum service area radius should be one-half mile. Two acres of neighborhood parkland should be provided for each 1,000 people.**
- **District parks should be at least five acres in size. The maximum service area radius should be one mile. Two acres of district park land should be provided for each 1,000 people.**

A park should be provided within walking distance of all residential neighborhoods and employment areas. The National Recreation and Park Association defines walking distance as one-half mile.

See also Policy L-21 and Programs L-16, L-22, L-25, L-30, L-32 and T-14
See also Goal G-5 and associated policy and programs for additional information on coordinated area plans

ACCESS

GOAL C-5: Equal Access to Educational, Recreational, and Cultural Services for All Residents.

Equal access refers to the location of facilities, their design, and the availability of transportation to reach them. Currently, some neighborhoods are better served by public facilities than others. In the future, the City will seek to provide new facilities in areas that lack them, helping to achieve the goal of "walkable" residential neighborhoods. It will also adapt existing facilities to ensure their accessibility to all persons, and will improve bicycle, pedestrian, and transit provisions to reduce reliance on the automobile.

See also Goals T-2 and T-3 and associated policies and programs

POLICY C-29:

Strategically locate public facilities and parks to serve all neighborhoods in the City.

POLICY C-30:

Facilitate access to parks and community facilities by a variety of transportation modes.

Photo courtesy of Marge Nystrom

The City of Palo Alto is committed to providing equal access to all services and facilities for all people. Cultural, ethnic and economic diversity strengthen the community, ensuring Palo Alto's bright future.

POLICY C-31:

Facilitate access to educational, recreational, and cultural services by continuing to provide financial assistance programs for residents with low-incomes and/or disabilities.

POLICY C-32:

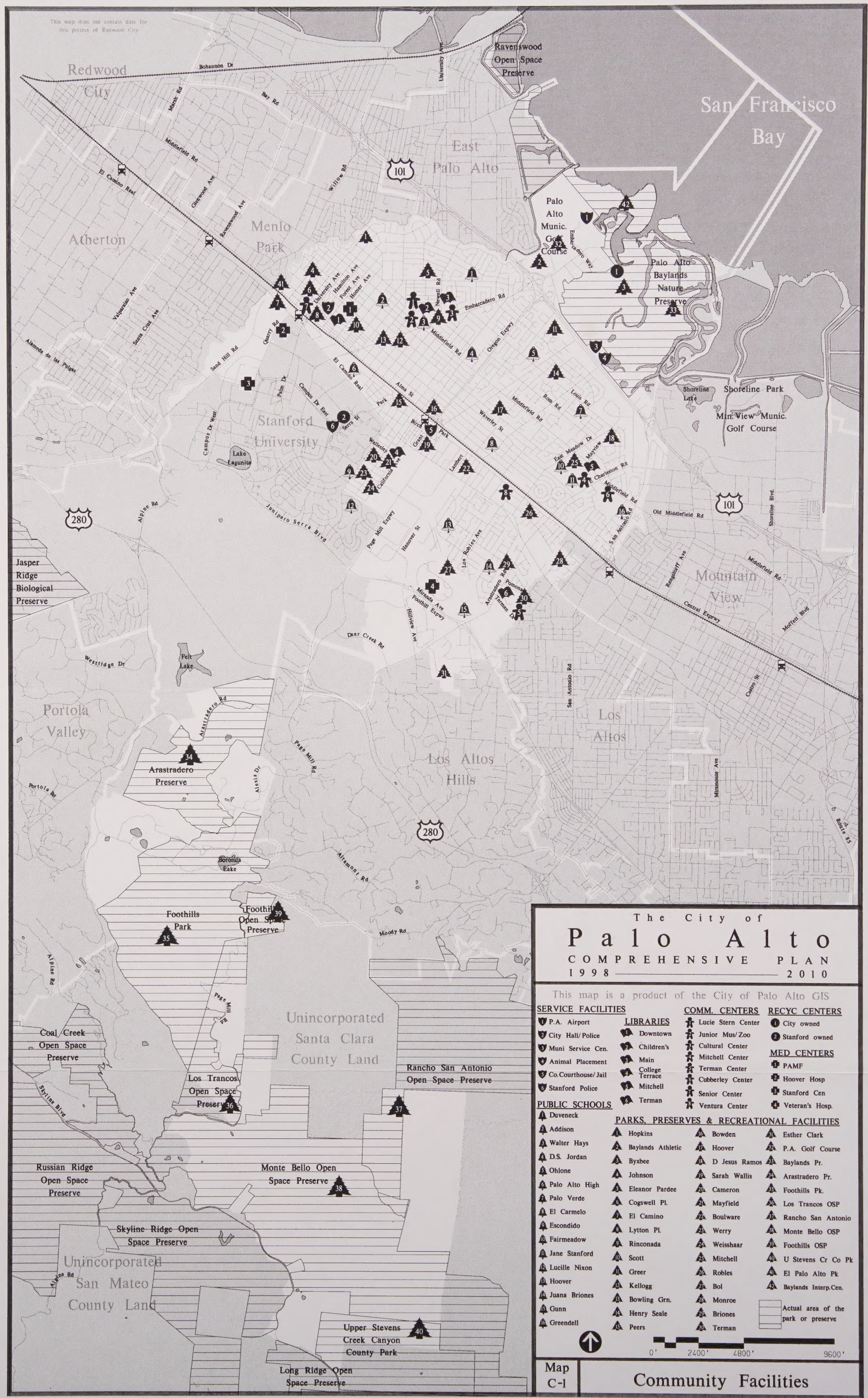
Provide fully accessible public facilities to all residents and visitors.

See also Goal T-7

PROGRAM C-27:

Continue to implement Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements in City facilities including, but not limited to, sidewalk curb cuts, building entrances, meeting room access, and sight and hearing adjuncts.

New technology and changes in our public and private facilities have positively impacted people with disabilities by moving them from the confines of their homes into the community at large. As people with disabilities become more mobile, additional impediments not previously anticipated have arisen. Continued awareness and planning will facilitate seamless participation by all community members.



The City of

Palo Alto

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

SERVICE FACILITIES

1. P.A. Airport
2. City Hall/ Police
3. Muni Service Cen.
4. Animal Placement
5. Co. Courthouse/ Jail
6. Stanford Police

LIBRARIES

1. Downtown
2. Children's
3. Main
4. College Terrace
5. Mitchell
6. Terman

COMM. CENTERS

1. Lucie Stern Center
2. Junior Mus/ Zoo
3. Cultural Center
4. Mitchell Center
5. Terman Center
6. Cubberley Center
7. Senior Center
8. Ventura Center

RECYC CENTERS

1. City owned
2. Stanford owned

MED CENTERS

1. PAMF
2. Hoover Hosp
3. Stanford Cen
4. Veteran's Hosp.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. Duveneck
2. Addison
3. Walter Hays
4. D.S. Jordan
5. Ohlone
6. Palo Alto High
7. Palo Verde
8. El Carmelo
9. Escondido
10. Fairmeadow
11. Jane Stanford
12. Lucille Nixon
13. Hoover
14. Juana Briones
15. Gunn
16. Greendell

PARKS, PRESERVES & RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

1. Hopkins
2. Baylands Athletic
3. Byxbee
4. Johnson
5. Eleanor Pardee
6. Cogswell Pl.
7. El Camino
8. Lytton Pl.
9. Rinconada
10. Scott
11. Greer
12. Kellogg
13. Bowling Grn.
14. Henry Seale
15. Peers
16. Bowden
17. Hoover
18. D Jesus Ramos
19. Sarah Wallis
20. Cameron
21. Mayfield
22. Boulware
23. Werry
24. Weisshaar
25. Mitchell
26. Robles
27. Bol
28. Monroe
29. Briones
30. Terman
31. Esther Clark
32. P.A. Golf Course
33. Baylands Pr.
34. Arastradero Pr.
35. Foothills Pk.
36. Los Trancos OSP
37. Rancho San Antonio
38. Monte Bello OSP
39. Foothills OSP
40. U Stevens Cr Co Pk
41. El Palo Alto Pk
42. Baylands Interp.Cen.

Actual area of the park or preserve

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map C-1

Community Facilities

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Date: 02FEB98-12.40.40 By: DASCOMBE

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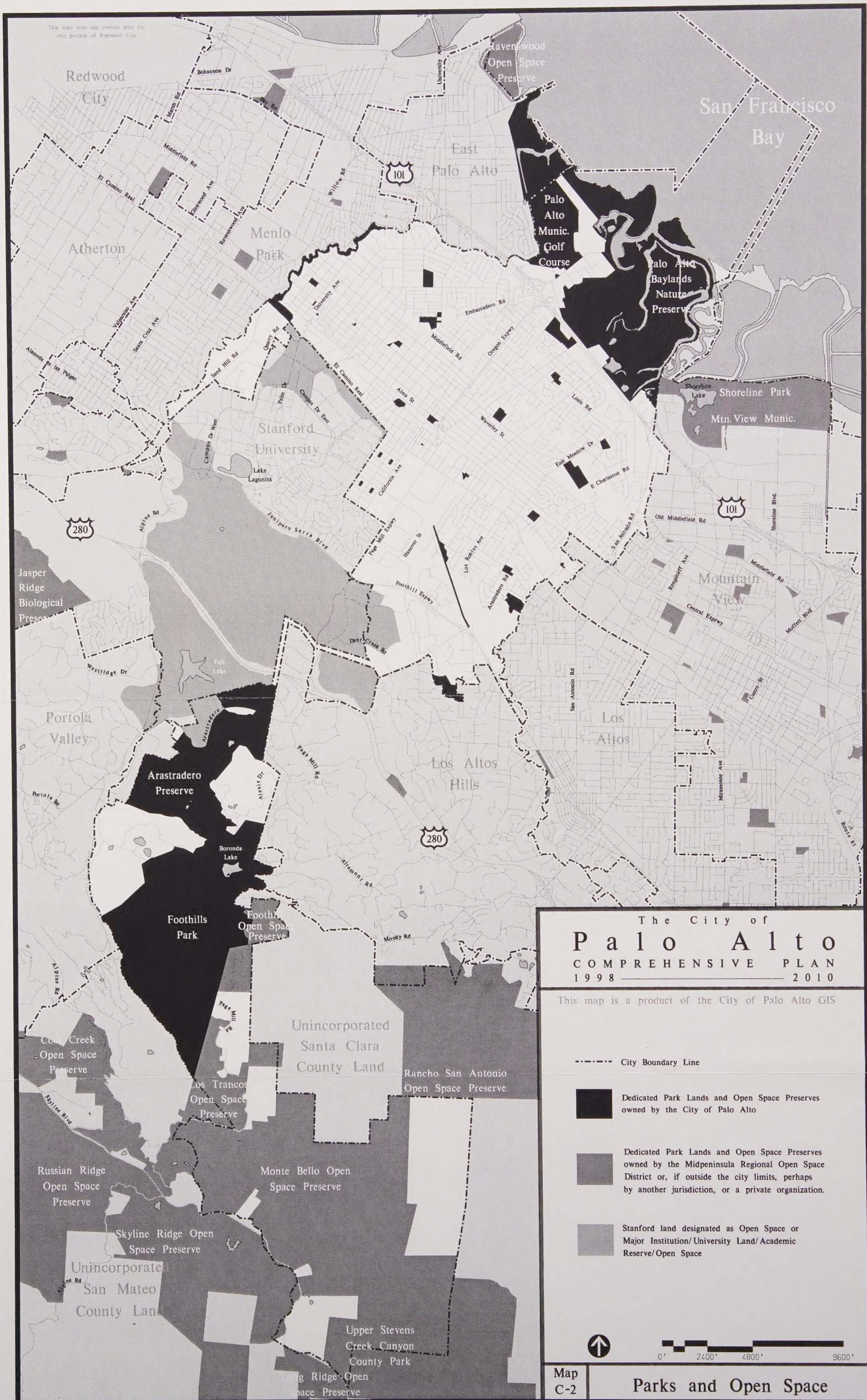

The City of Palo Alto COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1998 — 2010

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

City Boundary Line

Dedicated Park Lands and Open Space Preserves owned by the City of Palo Alto

Dedicated Park Lands and Open Space Preserves owned by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District or, if outside the city limits, perhaps by another jurisdiction, or a private organization.

Stanford land designated as Open Space or Major Institution/ University Land/ Academic Reserve/ Open Space

0' 2400' 4800' 9600'

Map C-2

Parks and Open Space

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Date: 24APR98-11.05.50 By: DASCOMBE

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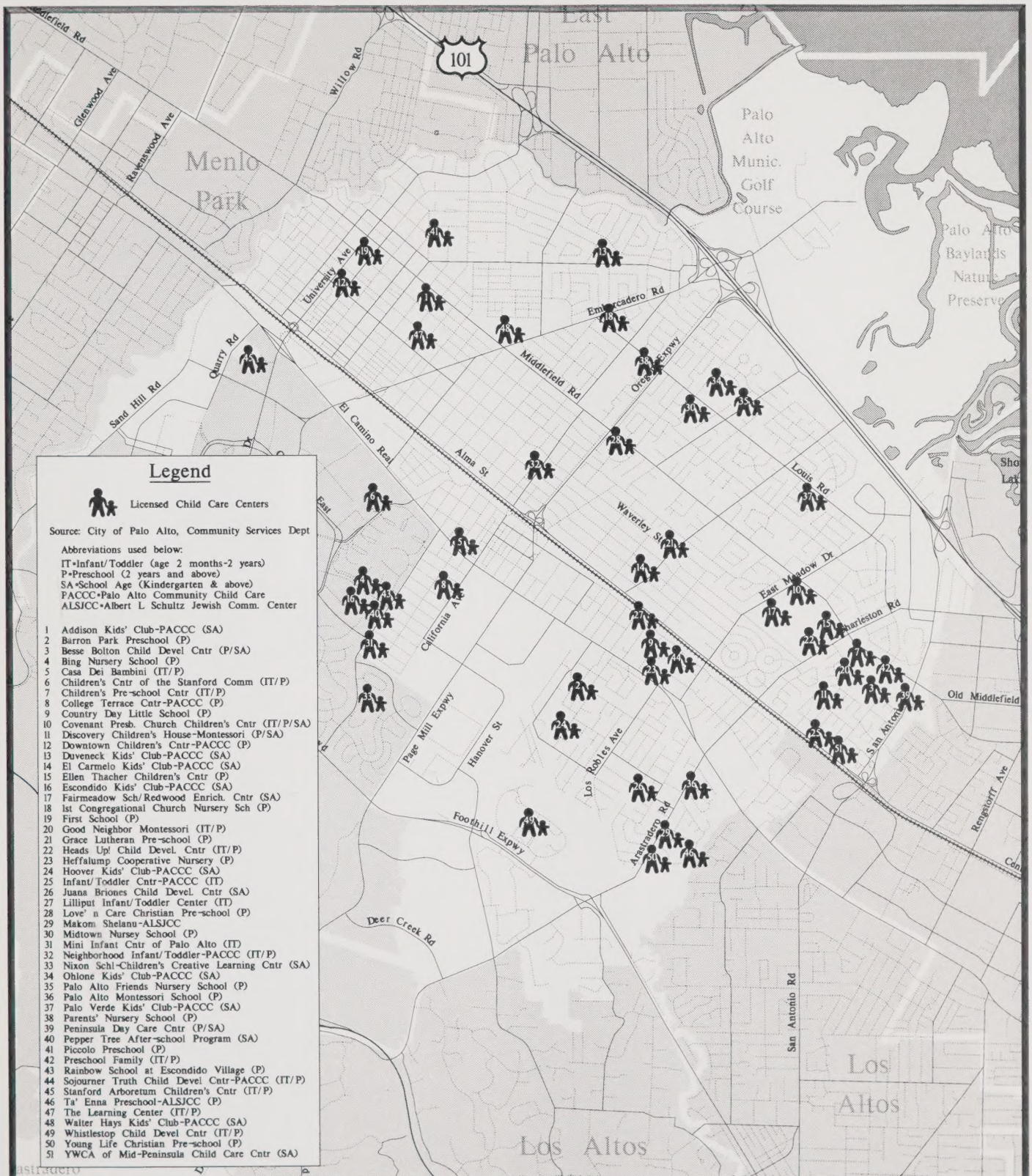

Legend

Licensed Child Care Centers

Source: City of Palo Alto, Community Services Dept

Abbreviations used below:

IT=Infant/Toddler (age 2 months-2 years)
P=Preschool (2 years and above)
SA=School Age (Kindergarten & above)
PACCC=Palo Alto Community Child Care
ALSJCC=Albert L Schultz Jewish Comm. Center

1 Addison Kids' Club-PACCC (SA)
2 Barron Park Preschool (P)
3 Besse Bolton Child Devel Cntr (P/SA)
4 Bing Nursery School (P)
5 Casa Dei Bambini (IT/P)
6 Children's Cntr of the Stanford Comm (IT/P)
7 Children's Pre-school Cntr (IT/P)
8 College Terrace Cntr-PACCC (P)
9 Country Day Little School (P)
10 Covenant Presb. Church Children's Cntr (IT/P/SA)
11 Discovery Children's House-Montessori (P/SA)
12 Downtown Children's Cntr-PACCC (P)
13 Duveneck Kids' Club-PACCC (SA)
14 El Carmelo Kids' Club-PACCC (SA)
15 Ellen Thacher Children's Cntr (P)
16 Escondido Kids' Club-PACCC (SA)
17 Fairmeadow Sch/Redwood Enrich. Cntr (SA)
18 1st Congregational Church Nursery Sch (P)
19 First School (P)
20 Good Neighbor Montessori (IT/P)
21 Grace Lutheran Pre-school (P)
22 Heads Up! Child Devel. Cntr (IT/P)
23 Heffalump Cooperative Nursery (P)
24 Hoover Kids' Club-PACCC (SA)
25 Infant/Toddler Cntr-PACCC (IT)
26 Juana Briones Child Devel. Cntr (SA)
27 Lilliput Infant/Toddler Center (IT)
28 Love' n Care Christian Pre-school (P)
29 Makom Shelanu-ALSJCC
30 Midtown Nursey School (P)
31 Mini Infant Cntr of Palo Alto (IT)
32 Neighborhood Infant/Toddler-PACCC (IT/P)
33 Nixon Schl-Children's Creative Learning Cntr (SA)
34 Ohlone Kids' Club-PACCC (SA)
35 Palo Alto Friends Nursery School (P)
36 Palo Alto Montessori School (P)
37 Palo Verde Kids' Club-PACCC (SA)
38 Parents' Nursery School (P)
39 Peninsula Day Care Cntr (P/SA)
40 Pepper Tree After-school Program (SA)
41 Piccolo Preschool (P)
42 Preschool Family (IT/P)
43 Rainbow School at Escondido Village (P)
44 Sojourner Truth Child Devel Cntr-PACCC (IT/P)
45 Stanford Arboretum Children's Cntr (IT/P)
46 Ta' Enna Preschool-ALSJCC (P)
47 The Learning Center (IT/P)
48 Walter Hays Kids' Club-PACCC (SA)
49 Whistlestop Child Devel Cntr (IT/P)
50 Young Life Christian Pre-school (P)
51 YWCA of Mid-Peninsula Child Care Cntr (SA)

This map is a product of the City of Palo Alto GIS

0' 2000' 4000'

The City of
Palo Alto
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
1998 — 2010

Map C-3

Licensed Child Care Facilities in Palo Alto (1998)

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Date: 31JAN98-08.59.40 By: DASCOMBE

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7 Business and Economics

Vision Statement

Palo Alto's business environment will be exciting, dynamic and vital. Businesses will have access to a wide array of support services and will enjoy positive relationships with Palo Alto residents, officials, and City staff. The competing needs of residents and businesses will be balanced so that neighborhoods are protected and enhanced while business districts are competitive and attractive. The local economy will thrive, and a diverse array of goods and services will be provided to Palo Alto consumers. Most development will occur within Palo Alto's employment areas, and will be consistent with the role and character designated for each area by this Plan.

Introduction

The Business and Economics Element addresses business-related policy issues at the citywide and sub-area levels. It is an optional Comprehensive Plan element but its goals, policies, and programs are equally important to those in the mandatory elements. The Element has been specifically prepared to ensure that the needs of Palo Alto's residential neighborhoods are balanced with those of its business community. Its goals emphasize compatibility, diversity, growth, and flexibility. Implementation of this Element will take place over time and will utilize the available planning and regulatory tools, such as the Zoning Ordinance, Coordinated Area Plans, growth limits and design review. The other, more traditional elements of the Comprehensive Plan, provide more on the programs to implement the policies in this Element.

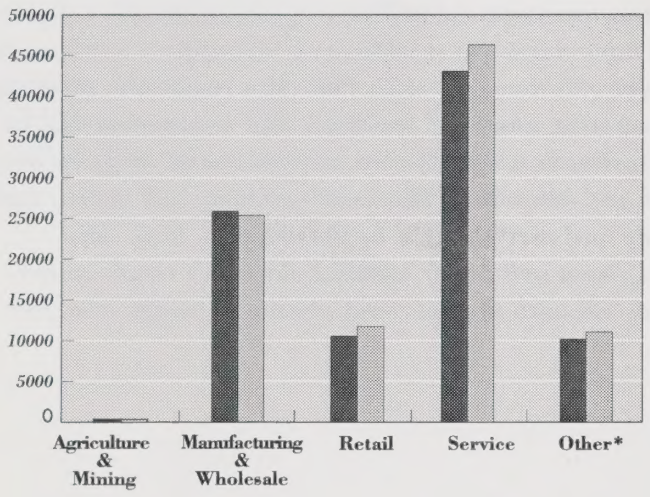
The Element begins with a description of local economic conditions and forecasts. This provides a framework for the next section, which presents goals, policies, and programs. The goals, policies, and programs are organized into three parts. The first has a citywide focus, the second addresses "Centers" like University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue, and the third addresses "Employment Districts" like Stanford Research Park. This format runs parallel to the Land Use and Community Design Element. The two elements are intended to work in tandem, supporting and complementing one another.

Planning Context

EMPLOYMENT

Silicon Valley and Palo Alto have experienced an economic expansion in 1995, 1996 and 1997 characterized by large increases in exports, profits, and public offerings. Following the loss of employment during the early 1990s (a net loss of about 5,000 jobs), Palo Alto and the Stanford Campus are now projected to increase employment through 2010. In 1995, there were approximately 90,000 jobs in greater Palo Alto (including Stanford University). The Association of Bay Area Government projects that total employment will reach 94,700 by the year 2010. Most of the increase is expected to occur in the retail and service industries. Continued decline is expected in agriculture, manufacturing, and wholesaling.

Existing and Projected Employment Figures



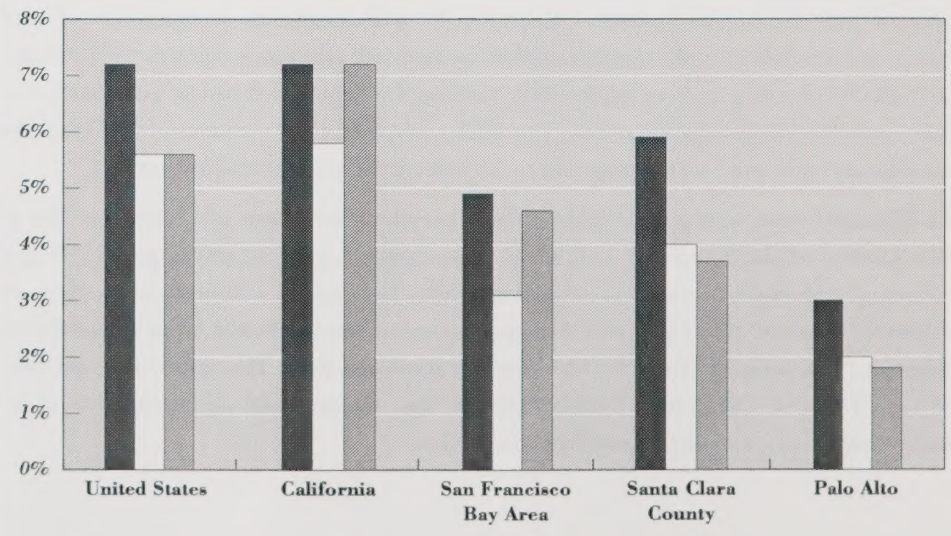
*Other includes: Construction, Transportation, Utilities, Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Government.

Source: ABAG, Projection '96

Major employers in Palo Alto include Stanford University, Stanford Medical Center, Hewlett-Packard, Varian Associates, Sun Microsystems, the Palo Alto Unified School District, the City of Palo Alto, the Veterans Administration Hospital, Lockheed Martin Missile & Space, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Watkins-Johnson Company, and the Xerox Corporation. Each of these companies, institutions or agencies employs more than 1,000 persons. The City is recognized as a center for software, biotechnology, financial, and professional services industries.

Unemployment in Palo Alto and Silicon Valley is extremely low, even though California and the Bay Area have lagged behind the rest of the country in recovering from the recent recession. In December 1997, the City's unemployment rate was 1.2 percent, compared with 2.3 percent in Santa Clara County and an average rate of 5.5 percent for the State of California.

Historic Unemployment Rate



Source: California Employment Development Department

Retail Sales

Available data show that retail sales tax returns to the City of Palo Alto totalled over $15 million in 1996. Retail sales experienced a 24 percent increase between 1989 and 1996. However, adjusting the figures for inflation indicates that sales actually increased by only 1 percent during the period. As the chart suggests, some parts of the City have fared better than others. Only Downtown and the Park Boulevard/Lambert area environs saw significant real growth in sales receipts during the 1989-1996 period. There were noticeable declines along south El Camino Real and in the City's Neighborhood Centers. The decline in the Neighborhood Centers may be the result of store closures in Midtown.

These numbers represent the City's one percent share of the 8.25 percent sales tax collected on local sales. The "other" category includes businesses the Bayshore area and other remaining businesses throughout the City.

Sales Tax Revenue Table

Location	1989	1996	Actual Change	CPI-Adjusted Change
University Ave/Downtown	$1,469,000	$2,365,000	61%	31%
Stanford Shopping Center	$3,283,000	$4,092,000	25%	2%
California Avenue	$706,000	$819,000	16%	-5%
El Camino Real	$1,160,000	$1,174,000	1%	-17%
Park/Lambert	$230,000	$1,086,000	372%	286%
Town & Country	$211,000	$199,000	-6%	-23%
Stanford Research Park	$2,535,000	$1,839,000	-27%	-41%
Neighborhood Centers	$253,000	$208,000	-18%	-33%
San Antonio Corridor	$1,281,000	$1,540,000	20%	-2%
Other*	$1,158,000	$1,940,000	68%	37%
TOTAL	**$12,286,000**	**$15,262,000**	**24%**	**1%**

* Includes businesses in the Bayshore area, and other remaining businesses throughout the city.

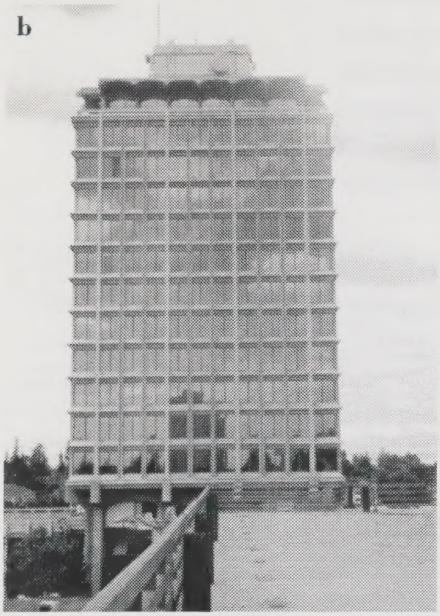
Source: Municipal Resource Consultants

Commercial Real Estate Market

In the mid 1990s, Palo Alto was characterized by higher rents and lower vacancy rates for office and retail space than the rest of the Peninsula and South Bay. Rents in Downtown Palo Alto are typically as much as 50 percent higher than in nearby communities. Available space throughout the city ranges from basements to office towers to one- and two-story buildings in campus settings. Amenities include locational qualities like views or public transportation, and physical qualities like parking and on-site locker rooms and showers. Locations in the University Avenue/Downtown area, on El Camino Real, in Stanford Research Park, and on California Avenue, garner the highest rents while the Bayshore and San Antonio areas are less expensive.

These are various office environments in Palo Alto; the cost of space ranges depending on location, type of space, and amenities.

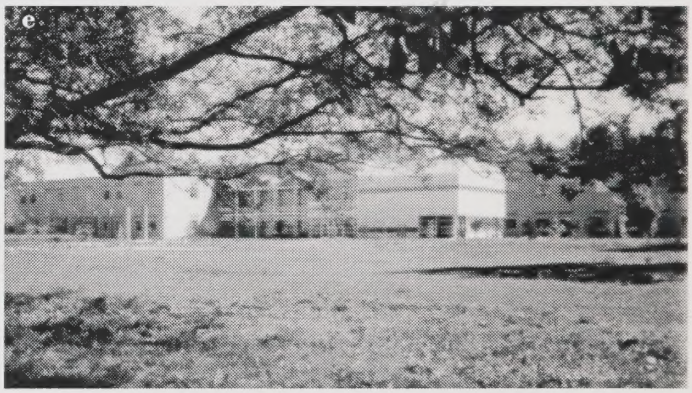
(a) Downtown low-rise space, reflecting the character of the surrounding area



(b) 525 University Avenue, one of the last downtown high-rises

(c) Historic residential properties converted into offices

(d) Office space over retail shops on California Avenue



(e) Stanford Research Park, with a campus-like character and more suburban setting

Goals, Policies, and Programs

CITYWIDE

Compatibility

GOAL B-1: A Thriving Business Environment that is Compatible with Palo Alto's Residential Character and Natural Environment.

Palo Alto encourages modest business growth that is compatible with the City's residential character. Given the strong local demand for nonresidential space, this requires careful balancing between the needs of business and the needs of Palo Alto neighborhoods as growth decisions are made. Potential unwanted side effects of growth like traffic, noise, and the loss of community character should be addressed. To achieve this balance, the City has adopted limits

on the amount of nonresidential floor space that may be added. These limits and their accompanying monitoring provisions are discussed in the Land Use and Community Design Element. Limits are based on the 1989 Citywide Land Use and Transportation Study, a planning document that evaluated growth in selected nonresidential areas of the City.

See also Policy L-8 and Programs L-7 & L-8 regarding growth caps

POLICY B-1:

Use a variety of planning and regulatory tools, including growth limits, to ensure that business change is compatible with the needs of Palo Alto neighborhoods.

In addition to growth limits, the City will use zoning, development review, environmental review, coordinated area plans, and other planning tools, to maintain compatibility between residential and nonresidential areas.

POLICY B-2:

Support a strong interdependence between existing commercial centers and the surrounding neighborhoods as a way of encouraging economic vitality.

POLICY B-3:

Recognize that Palo Alto's street tree system is an economic asset to the City.

See also Goal N-3 in the Natural Environment Element

Diversity

GOAL B-2: A Diverse Mix of Commercial, Retail, and Professional Service Businesses.

The City recognizes that part of its economic strength stems from its diversity of small and large businesses and the distinctive neighborhoods and districts in which these businesses are located. Palo Alto will strive to maintain and enhance this diversity in the future. The City recognizes growing needs for additional goods and services in the community and would like these needs to be met within its business districts. Palo Alto supports increased basic personal and professional services, commercial support services, industrial suppliers, and high tech component manufacturers within its employment areas. Improving access to these services can enhance the quality of life for residents and also make the City a more attractive choice for new businesses considering a Palo Alto location.

POLICY B-4:

Nurture and support established businesses as well as new businesses.

POLICY B-5:

Maintain distinct business districts within Palo Alto as a means of retaining local services and diversifying the City's economic base.

POLICY B-6:

Maintain distinct neighborhood shopping areas that are attractive, accessible, and convenient to nearby residents.

PROGRAM B-1:

Initiate assessment districts or other programs to facilitate neighborhood shopping center improvements such as landscaping, parking, and access to public transportation.

Independent businesses are encouraged as an important component of the local economy. A. Stapleton Florist has been in this building at this location for over 30 years.

POLICY B-7:
Encourage and support the operation of small, independent businesses.

POLICY B-8:
Encourage the renovation and reuse of long-term vacant buildings.

Long-term vacant buildings are those that have been vacant for 12 or more months.

Growth

GOAL B-3: New Businesses that Provide Needed Local Services and Municipal Revenues, Contribute to Economic Vitality, and Enhance the City's Physical Environment.

Palo Alto recognizes the need to revitalize its older commercial areas and supports reinvestment and business growth in these areas. The City also recognizes that economic growth can bring many benefits to the community, including greater tax revenues, local job opportunities, increased diversity, and physical improvements. Palo Alto is not interested in encouraging growth for growth's sake; rather, it encourages growth that helps meet identified community needs. The City will collaborate with the business community to facilitate growth, development, and infrastructure improvements that benefit residents and businesses alike.

POLICY B-9:
Encourage new businesses that meet the City's business and economic goals to locate in Palo Alto.

PROGRAM B-2:

Implement the City's Economic Resources Plan.

The Palo Alto Economic Resources Plan presents the City's long-term strategy for working with the local business community. The Plan has four objectives:

- Establish a stronger working relationship with the business community to maximize local benefits from long-term economic trends;
- Consider the City's economic future when making growth decisions;
- Revisit past policies that affect business to determine whether they are still relevant; and
- Establish a market perspective within the City organization.

The Plan has resulted in the creation of a business outreach program, a business retention program, a streamlined development application program, and active City participation in regional economic planning.

POLICY B-10:

Promote Palo Alto's image as a business-friendly community. Assume an active role in fostering new business, particularly small, start-up businesses in emerging industries.

POLICY B-11:

Encourage the use of public/private partnerships as a means of redeveloping and revitalizing selected areas.

PROGRAM B-3:

On an ongoing basis, evaluate opportunities for City involvement in public/private partnerships, including public investment in infrastructure and other improvements, siting of public art, and modification of land use regulations and other development controls.

POLICY B-12:

Encourage the private sector to participate in partnerships with nonprofit or public agencies to provide community benefits and services that would not otherwise be made available.

See also Policy C-7 on the private sector's role in delivery of services

Residents, businesses and public agencies are encouraged to work together to benefit the City as a whole. An example of such an effort is the City's anti-graffiti program.

POLICY B-13:

Support the development of technologically-advanced communications infrastructure and other improvements that will facilitate the growth of emerging telecommunications industries.

The growing need for antennas to support the telecommunications industry may result in the need to create a Citywide plan for the siting of such facilities.

PROGRAM B-4:

Develop the City Council-approved fiber optic ring around the City as recommended in the 1996 Telecommunications Strategy Study and evaluate and implement enhancements to the system.

This project would involve the installation of a fiber optic ring around the City using the conduits and poles of existing utilities. Access to the system would be leased to all interested service providers. Electronic hardware, including light transmitters and receivers, will be supplied by those companies that activate the system.

POLICY B-14:

Work with electronic information network providers to maximize potential benefits for Palo Alto businesses, schools, residences, and other potential users.

POLICY B-15:

Allow the creative use of City utilities and rights-of-way to ensure competition among networks in providing information systems infrastructure.

Flexibility

GOAL B-4: City Regulations and Operating Procedures that Provide Certainty and Predictability and Help Businesses Adapt to Changing Market Conditions.

Development regulations have an impact on the ability of business to respond to changes in the marketplace. Palo Alto will work with the local business community to make sure that its regulations and development review processes maintain the City's competitive edge as an economic center. This could involve modifying regulations to make them more flexible and responsive to emerging technologies and other changes.

See also Policy G-12 and associated programs

POLICY B-16:

Encourage streamlining of City administrative and regulatory processes wherever possible. Reduce inefficiencies, overlap, and time delays associated with these processes.

PROGRAM B-5:

Simplify the design review process for small-scale changes to previously approved site plans and buildings.

See also Program G-17 on Zoning Ordinance revisions

PROGRAM B-6:

Regularly evaluate ways to improve coordination of the City's environmental review, permitting, and inspection processes, including issues relating to hazardous materials and water quality regulations.

PROGRAM B-7:

Improve design guidelines to reduce ambiguity and more clearly articulate design principles to the business community.

PROGRAM B-8:

Evaluate methods to achieve the development limitations currently imposed by adopted floor area ratios in a more flexible manner. Such methods could include the use of building envelope restrictions.

Presently, the City's Zoning Ordinance specifies a maximum allowable floor area ratio—that is, the ratio of floor area to lot area—for all districts. The purpose of this limitation is twofold. First, FAR limits the intensity of land use to lessen the environmental consequences of development. Second, FAR is intended to control the mass and scale of development. These same objectives can also be achieved through more flexible zoning and design tools that use performance standards and building form requirements. Such tools will be explored in future area planning efforts and in the development of the new Zoning Ordinance and design guidelines.

PROGRAM B-9:

Revise the Sign Ordinance to more clearly reflect community design standards and requirements relating to size, number of signs, allowed locations, and design.

See also Policy L-50 regarding signage

PROGRAM B-10:

Revise zoning and other regulations as needed to encourage the revitalization of aging retail areas.

CENTERS

GOAL B-5: Attractive, Vibrant Business Centers, Each with a Mix of Uses and a Distinctive Character.

See also Goal L-4 and associated policies and programs

As outlined in the Land Use and Community Design Element, Palo Alto contains about a dozen commercial "Centers" ranging from regional areas like University Avenue/Downtown to neighborhood shopping centers like Alma Plaza. The Land Use and Community Design Element classifies the City's Centers as "Regional," "Multi-neighborhood," and "Neighborhood" in their orientation. Just as each type of Center has different physical attributes, each has different economic attributes. Regional Centers employ large numbers of people, attract shoppers from well beyond Palo Alto's boundaries, generate high sales tax revenues, and offer the broadest mix of goods and services. Multi-neighborhood Centers serve a much smaller area, typically the City or several neighborhoods within the City. Neighborhood Centers are the smallest unit; although their economic contributions are less substantial, they are vital to Palo Alto residents and are very much a part of community life.

Policies and programs below are organized into four categories: those that apply to all Centers, those that apply to specific Regional Centers, those that apply to specific Multi-neighborhood Centers, and those that apply to Neighborhood Centers.

All Centers

POLICY B-17:

Where redevelopment is desired, encourage owners to upgrade commercial properties through incentives such as reduced parking requirements, credit for on-street parking, and increases in allowable floor area. Use such incentives only where they are needed to stimulate redevelopment or contribute to housing or community design goals.

Redevelopment can provide opportunities for improvement. In some of Palo Alto's shopping centers and along some sections of El Camino Real there has been little property improvement during the last 30 or 40 years. Reinvestment is needed to upgrade or replace buildings and make other improvements so that these commercial areas are more competitive and better serve the community. Some of these properties could be redesigned to be more attractive and inviting for pedestrians. Some could provide a source of additional housing through mixed use development. In some situations, incentives like reduced parking requirements or increased floor area allowances may encourage redevelopment and at the same time contribute to housing or community design goals. The City has identified parts of El Camino Real, the Cal-Ventura mixed use area, and Midtown as locations where redevelopment is desired.

PROGRAM B-11:

Identify and prioritize Centers in need of economic or physical revitalization.

See also Program H-10 regarding new housing on parking lot sites

POLICY B-18:

Create incentives for providing multi-unit housing on top of parking lots in or near commercial centers and transit hubs.

POLICY B-19:

Use street corridor improvements as catalysts for economic revitalization in selected Centers.

The City is willing to use street improvements and similar incentives if they are likely to enhance an area's economic viability and contribute to its distinctive function.

Regional Centers

University Avenue/Downtown

See also Programs L-8, L-9, L-19, L-20, N-70, N-71 and Policies L-23, L-24, L-6, T-21 and T-45

POLICY B-20:

Support and enhance the University Avenue/Downtown area as a vital mixed use area containing retail, personal service, office, restaurant, and entertainment uses. Recognize the importance of an appropriate retail mix, including small local businesses, to the continued vitality of Downtown.

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

The Ramona Street Historic District provides a desirable location for downtown offices and retail stores.

The University Avenue/Downtown area is a regional retail and entertainment attraction, and a professional office and service commercial center for Palo Alto. Its historic buildings, architectural variety and public improvements contribute to its economic success. In the past, the City has taken steps to maintain the area's strong retail function by limiting the amount of first floor office space. To protect the areas's scale and character, the total amount of non-residential floor space allowed is also regulated.

South of Forest Mixed Use Area (SOFA)

POLICY B-21:

Maintain uses in the South of Forest Area (SOFA) that complement the Downtown business district, allow for the continued operation of automotive service uses, and serve the needs of nearby neighborhoods.

The SOFA area provides, in addition to some housing, a mix of automotive, professional office, and service commercial uses. It has been identified as a valuable sub-area of University Avenue/Downtown, providing an eclectic mix of uses that might seem incompatible in other parts of town. These uses are essential components of a full-service city and should be maintained in the future.

See also Policy L-9 concerning Mixed Use

Stanford Shopping Center

POLICY B-22:

Work with Stanford University to ensure that the Stanford Shopping Center is sustained as a distinctive, competitive, high quality regional shopping center.

See also Policies L-24, L-26 and T-24 and associated programs regarding the Stanford Shopping Center

Stanford Shopping Center is a major regional retail center. The City is committed to working with the University to keep the Center competitive.

In 1995, Stanford Shopping Center had gross sales of $284.00 per square foot, the highest for any major center in the Bay Area.

Photo courtesy of Stanford Shopping Center Property Management

Multi-neighborhood Centers

California Avenue/Cal-Ventura

POLICY B-23:

Maintain the existing local-serving retail orientation of the California Avenue business district. Discourage development that would turn the district into a regional shopping area or intrude into adjacent residential neighborhoods.

See also Policies L-28 through L-31 and Programs L-28 and L-29 on development in the California Avenue area

The California Avenue business area includes a community retail center along California Avenue and service commercial, office, and light industrial uses in the Cal-Ventura mixed use area. This Center contains a mix of retail and service uses that serve the day-to-day needs of Palo Alto residents. Typical uses include groceries, dry cleaners, hair styling shops, banks, drug stores and other local-serving businesses. This orientation is considered very desirable, as it serves an economic niche that is distinct from University Avenue/Downtown and the Stanford Shopping Center. California Avenue and the adjacent Cal-Ventura area are also located near the Stanford Research Park. Over time, this is likely to create market pressure for the business district to respond to a wider range of needs. Responding to this pressure while still meeting neighborhood needs will be a major challenge in the future.

POLICY B-24:

Foster the establishment of businesses and commercial services in the California Avenue business district that serve the adjacent neighborhoods as well as Stanford Research Park.

El Camino Real

See also Policies L-35 and L-36 and associated programs

POLICY B-25:

Strengthen the commercial viability of businesses along El Camino Real. Encourage the development of pedestrian-oriented neighborhood retail and office centers along the El Camino corridor.

El Camino Real is home to a variety of auto-oriented community and neighborhood commercial uses, including restaurants, service stations, hotels, motels, and offices. The City will encourage new community and neighborhood-serving commercial uses in this corridor. The objective is to create an environment that is more hospitable for pedestrians and a place that can be identified as one or more distinct "centers" rather than a commercial "strip."

Photo courtesy of Sandy Eakins

The El Camino Way "island" has the potential to become the focus of a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center.

PROGRAM B-12:

Identify key sites on El Camino Real that would be suitable for Neighborhood Centers. Evaluate economic, design, and regulatory opportunities and constraints for each site, and identify potential incentives that could be offered by the City to improve the area's appearance and economic vitality.

Town and Country Village

See also Policy L-32

POLICY B-26:

Retain the local-serving retail character of Town and Country Village.

The character of Town and Country Village is created not only by its architecture and landscaping but also by its mix of businesses. These uses include local-serving grocery stores, apparel and specialty retail shops, commercial services, and restaurants. Any redevelopment of the site should be consistent with this mix. New residential uses on the site would be considered compatible, provided they did not reduce the Village's ability to serve Palo Alto's residents.

Town and Country Village is located less than one-half mile from University Avenue/Downtown and the Stanford Shopping Center, both of which are regional commercial attractions with substantial pedestrian traffic. This area may benefit from improved physical pedestrian connections to these two centers.

Neighborhood Centers

POLICY B-27:

Support the upgrading and revitalization of Palo Alto's four Neighborhood Commercial Centers.

See also Policies L-37, L-38, L-39, L-40, L-41 and their related programs; see also Policy T-31

Neighborhood Centers include Midtown, Alma Plaza, Charleston, and Edgewood Plaza. The primary concern in these Centers is revitalization. The City wishes to increase the economic competitiveness and vitality of these areas and is willing to examine regulatory changes and public improvement programs to achieve this objective. This could involve the use of tax or assessment districts to finance necessary improvements.

PROGRAM B-13:

Review the effect of size caps, parking requirements, and other land use restrictions on the viability and competitiveness of neighborhood centers.

EMPLOYMENT DISTRICTS

GOAL B-6: Thriving Employment Districts at Stanford Research Park, Stanford Medical Center, East Bayshore/San Antonio Road Area and Bayshore Corridor that Complement the City's Business and Neighborhood Centers.

The Land Use and Community Design Element identifies several distinct Employment Districts in Palo Alto. These Districts are an essential part of the local economic base. They provide thousands of jobs, create a customer base for many Palo Alto businesses, and generate revenues to the City through property and sales taxes. Keeping these areas economically healthy

Hewlett-Packard originated in Palo Alto and the firm headquarters are located in the Stanford Research Park. The company is internationally recognized for innovation and contributions in high technology. The Palo Alto facilities established a "campus image" for the Research Park that persists today, and has served as a model for other research parks throughout the country.

and viable will require local policies that recognize market realities and respond to the needs of local business. The private sector's ability to respond to changes in the marketplace should be protected at Stanford Research Park. Additional services that help sustain local businesses should be encouraged at these locations, especially along El Camino Real. In the San Antonio Road area, the existing mix of business and industry should be maintained. The area provides a lower-cost alternative for new and expanding businesses as well as much needed support services for other businesses in Palo Alto.

Stanford Research Park

See also Policy L-44 and Program L-45

POLICY B-28:

Support the positive relationship between the local business community and Stanford University faculty, alumni, and administrators.

One of the keys to this relationship is to provide the University with the ability to respond to changes in the demand for office and high technology floor space. Flexibility is critical if the Research Park is to remain competitive with others in the Bay Area and nation.

POLICY B-29:

Facilitate Stanford's ability to respond to changing market conditions that support the long-term viability of the Research Park.

See also Program L-43

PROGRAM B-14:

Modify zoning regulations to allow convenience-oriented businesses such as restaurants and office support services within the Research Park.

PROGRAM B-15:

Review policies and regulations guiding development at Stanford Research Park and revise them as needed to allow improved responsiveness to changing market conditions.

PROGRAM B-16:

Study the feasibility of a "transfer of development rights" (TDR) program and other measures that would provide greater development flexibility within Stanford Research Park without creating significant adverse traffic impacts or increasing the allowable floor area.

POLICY B-30:

Encourage commercial investment and activity along El Camino Real that complements the Stanford Research Park and enhances its physical appearance.

Reinvestment along El Camino Real not only benefits Research Park employees, but also helps the City achieve its objective of establishing El Camino as a strong Multi-neighborhood Center. Providing services like restaurants within walking distance of the Research Park also helps fulfill the City's goal of reducing auto dependence. Reinvestment also provides a mechanism for improving the physical appearance of El Camino Real and creating a stronger identity for the corridor.

PROGRAM B-17:

Identify opportunities along El Camino Real where a concentration of commercial services serving Research Park employees and visitors might be created.

Program B-18:

Evaluate the location near the northwest corner of Page Mill Road and El Camino Real for a hotel and conference facility.

The Chamber of Commerce and Stanford Research Park tenants and management have identified a need for a convenient, modern hotel to support local visitors. The Research Park and University both receive many visitors, including many international guests, and local accommodations are not sufficient to accommodate them. A new hotel would be an attractive addition and amenity for Stanford Research Park.

Policy B-31:

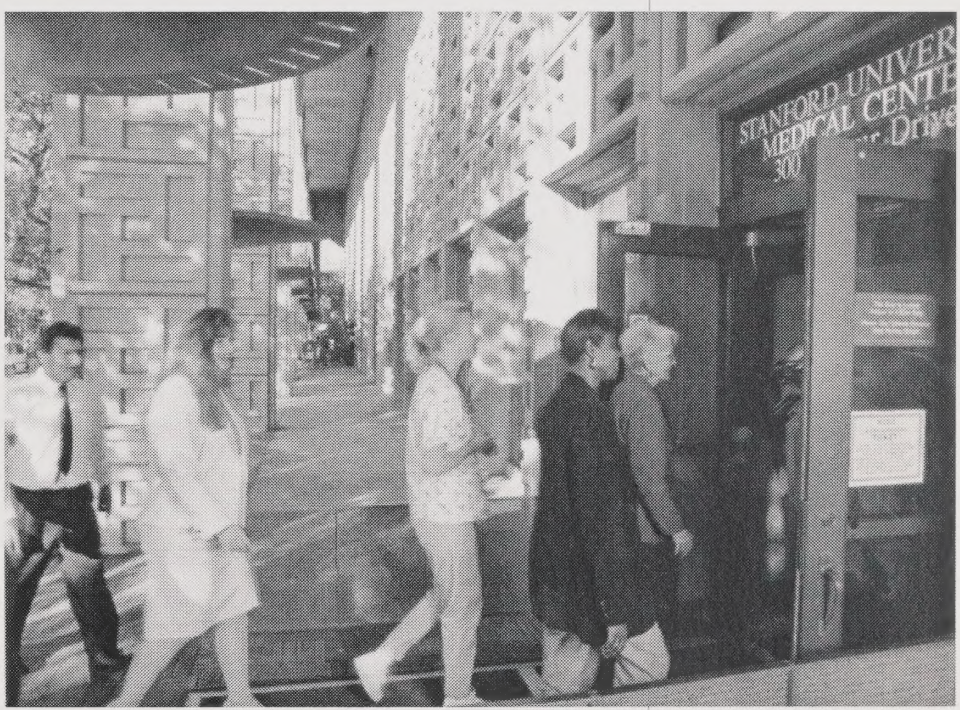
Encourage incubator businesses in Stanford Research Park.

Stanford Medical Center

Policy B-32:

Assist Stanford Medical Center in responding to changes in the delivery of health care services. Work with the Center to plan for changing facility needs, but within the context of City of Palo Alto planning goals and policies, as well as the goals and policies of other relevant jurisdictions.

See also Policy L-45 and Program L-46, and Policy T-48



Stanford Medical Center will need to meet the changing demands of the health care industry in the future.

Photo courtesy of Stanford University Visual Arts Services

The Medical Center, including the Stanford University School of Medicine, the Stanford University Clinic, Stanford University Hospital, and Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital, employs more than 8,000 people and is one of the largest concentrations of health care services in the Bay Area. Because the health care industry is constantly changing, the Medical Center is likely to need additional development entitlements from the City to respond to future facility needs and space demands.

See also Policies L-46 and L-47

POLICY B-33:

Discourage actions that could increase the cost of business space in the San Antonio Road and East Bayshore areas.

The East Bayshore and San Antonio Road areas serve a special economic role. Its relatively low-cost space provides opportunities for a variety of service industries and start-up businesses that could not feasibly locate in the higher cost areas. This role should be protected in the future.

8 Governance

Vision Statement

Palo Alto will maintain a positive civic image and be a leader in the regional, state, and national policy discussions affecting the community. The City will work with neighboring communities to address common concerns and pursue common interests. The public will be actively and effectively involved in City affairs, both at the Citywide and neighborhood levels. Where appropriate, the City Council will delegate decision-making responsibilities to local boards and commissions. The Council will also assign advisory roles to these bodies as well as other community groups. Residents, businesses, and elected and appointed officials will work collaboratively to address the issues facing the City in a timely manner. This inclusive, participatory process will help build a sense of community.

Introduction

The Governance Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan is a new non-mandatory section that addresses community involvement and participation in the city planning process. The chapter provides guidance to citizens and neighborhood groups seeking to participate in this process. It also provides guidance to those carrying out the policies and programs in this Plan. The chapter is intended as a vehicle for implementation rather than a Plan "element" in the traditional and legal sense. Consequently, it is not subject to the State requirements for consistency and comprehensiveness that apply to the earlier sections of the Plan.

The Governance Chapter begins by describing the framework within which local planning decisions are made. It profiles the City's governing bodies and major departments as well as the funding sources for municipal activities. This sets the stage for the goals, policies, and programs that follow.

Framework for Local Decision-Making

Form of Government

Palo Alto was incorporated as a Chartered City in 1909. The City has adopted a strong City Council/City Manager form of government. The City Council is comprised of nine members who each serve four-year terms. The mayor and vice-mayor are elected to one-year terms by their fellow Council members. The City Council has two standing committees: the Finance Committee and the Policy and Services Committee. In addition to their legislative duties, Council members represent the City on a variety of local, county, regional, and statewide boards, commissions and other organizations. These include the Santa Clara County Cities Association, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, among others.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The City Council has created a number of boards and commissions to advise the City Council on policy issues. These boards and commissions serve a variety of specific functions like development review, protection of historic buildings, and youth relations. Board and commission functions are summarized in the table below:

Boards and Commissions

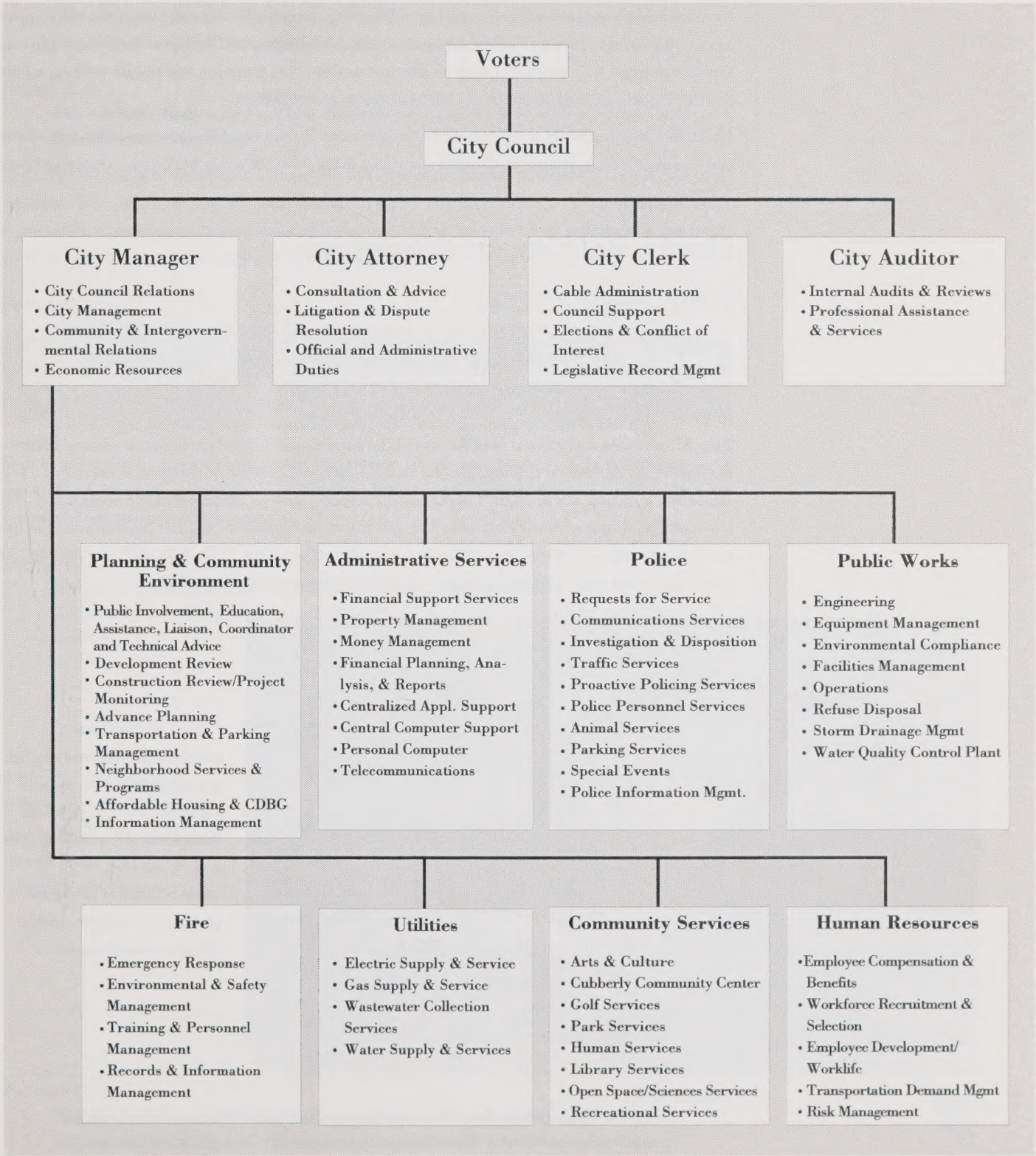
Board or Commission	No. of Members	Term Length	Requirements for Membership	Purpose	Supporting Dept. or Division
Architectural Review Board (ARB)	5	3	3 members must be architects, landscape architects, building designers or other design professionals	Promote orderly and harmonious development, enhance the desirability of residence or investment, encourage the most desirable use of land and improvements, enhance living conditions, and promote visual environments of high aesthetic quality and variety.	Planning Division
Historic Resources Board (HRB)	7	3	3 members must be architects, landscape architects, building designers or other design professionals, one member must own and occupy a historic structure in Palo Alto and one member must possess academic education or practical experience in history or related field.	Designate, preserve, protect, enhance and perpetuate those historic structures, districts and neighborhoods that contribute to the cultural and aesthetic heritage of Palo Alto.	Planning Division
Human Relations Commission (HRC)	7	3	Palo Alto residency	Foster public awareness and understanding of human relations problems. Address issues of human rights, discrimination and other related human service issues.	Office of Human Services
Planning Commission	7	4	Palo Alto residency	Prepare, adopt and make recommendations to the City Council on the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance. Make recommendations to Council regarding land use policies & specific development applications.	Planning Division
Public Art Commission (PAC)	7	3	Member ARB, or professional, scholar, educator or collector of the visual arts	Aquire and site permanent works of art, specifically outdoor sculpture; advise the City in matters pertaining to the quality, quantity, scope & style of art in public places	Arts and Cultural Division
Utilities Advisory Commission (UAC)	5	3	Utility customer or authorized representative of a utility customer.	Advise the City Council on long-range planning and policy matters relating to the electric, water & gas utilities	Utilities Department

The Palo Alto City Council is assisted by six major boards and commissions with a total of 38 members.

CITY DEPARTMENTS

The City Council is served by four Council-appointed officers: the City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk, and City Auditor. The organization of City departments and their major functions is illustrated in the chart below.

Organization of City Departments



BUDGET

The City uses a "mission-driven" budget process. Through this process, City services are grouped into functional areas and major activities, each with a defined mission and criteria for evaluating how well that mission is being achieved. Each City department must identify its customers and the services it provides to the public and other City departments. Major components of the budget include the General Fund and the Utilities Fund.

General Fund revenues are generated by sales tax, property tax, and utility user tax collections, along with service fees and other revenues and transfers from the Utilities Fund. Expenditures include general City services (such as administration, fire, planning and public works), school district leases, capital projects, and debt service, among others.

Utilities Fund revenues are generated through rates for various City services including water, sewer, gas, electric, refuse, and storm drainage. Expenditures cover the cost of providing these services.

Goals, Policies, and Programs

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

GOAL G-1: Effective Opportunities for Public Participation in Local Government.

Palo Alto invites and encourages the public to participate in local government affairs. Citizens may serve on boards and commissions and ad hoc committees addressing a variety of civic concerns. Meeting are open and highly interactive so that all members of the community may take part in shaping local decisions. The advent of electronic media and on-line services has created new opportunities for public input and participation. Palo Alto will continue to use these and other emerging technologies to improve access to information.

Citizens are welcome to communicate with their elected and appointed officials, even about matters that are not on the agenda of the meeting. The time for this type of communication is during the portion of the agenda called "Oral Communications."

POLICY G-1:

Delegate appropriate decision-making to the Planning Commission, with an appeal process to the City Council, to simplify and shorten the project review process for certain types of projects.

The City will consider changes to the City Charter that would delegate more responsibility for land use decisions to the Planning Commission. Many land use decisions now require both Planning Commission and City Council hearings. Delegating more decision-making to the Planning Commission, subject to appeal to the City Council, would streamline the application process and relieve applicants of unnecessary proceedings.

PROGRAM G-1:

Initiate a charter amendment for the ballot that would delegate specific final decision-making authority to the Planning Commission.

POLICY G-2:

Use advisory bodies and ad hoc committees to assist City staff and the City Council on policy issues.

The City Council is committed to delegating more responsibilities to existing boards and commissions. The creation of new advisory bodies by either the City Manager or City Council, when a particular expertise or broader base of input is required, would allow people who are interested to be more effectively engaged in and connected to the civic affairs of the community.

PROGRAM G-2:

Periodically assess the need for citizen input on various policy issues and appoint advisory bodies and ad hoc committees as needed.

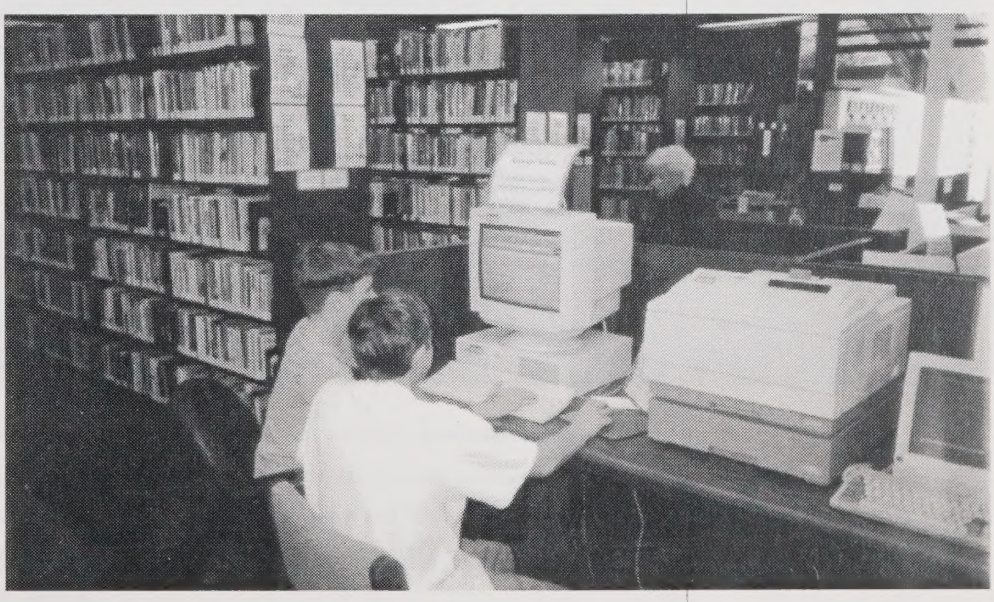
PROGRAM G-3:

Use design workshops or charettes to address design issues within the City.

Regular community input on relevant urban design issues can keep the City decision-makers and staff informed as to community concerns early in design processes and can facilitate the solution of urban design problems.

POLICY G-3:

Enhance communication between residents, organizations, and the City Council by providing access to information via electronic media and other methods.



Public access to the City's meeting agendas and staff reports is provided via the Internet at City Hall and at selected public libraries.

PROGRAM G-4:

Establish a City/neighborhood liaison system using electronic and print media to inform residents of current issues and facilitate resident feedback to the City Council and staff.

PROGRAM G-5:

Create electronic bulletin boards to increase opportunities for interaction between citizens and government, including the posting of meeting agendas and other items of broad interest.

PROGRAM G-6:

Provide advanced communication opportunities for the public at City libraries.

CIVIC AND NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS

GOAL G-2: Informed and Involved Civic and Neighborhood Organizations and Residents.

Palo Alto supports the formation and operation of neighborhood and civic organizations. Many individuals find it easier and more compelling to be engaged in their immediate neighborhood than in citywide activities. Many citywide objectives such as emergency preparedness and neighborhood beautification may be more easily achieved through the efforts of individual neighborhood and civic groups than they might be through a centralized City program.

POLICY G-4:

Encourage the formation of neighborhood organizations to facilitate effective resident participation in the community.

Photo courtesy of Will Beckett

The Barron Park Association, shown here, is a neighborhood association that has proven to be an effective intermediary between individual residents of Barron Park and various government agencies. Examples of successes have included clean-up efforts of groundwater contamination originating in the Stanford Research Park, natural creek protection in flood control projects by the Santa Clara Water District, and crime prevention in collaboration with the Palo Alto Police and businesses along El Camino Real.

Neighborhood organizations provide residents with opportunities to learn about citywide issues on a localized scale. They also provide a useful means of relaying local priorities and concerns back to the City Council and others involved in City government.

PROGRAM G-7:

Prepare a handbook of information about neighborhood and civic organizations addressing subjects like earthquake preparedness, neighborhood beautification, event planning, how to communicate with City Hall, and guidelines for establishing and managing neighborhood and civic organizations.

PROGRAM G-8:

Establish consistent definitions of neighborhood boundaries to facilitate notification and communication.

The City currently has different neighborhood designations for fire, utilities, and other departments. Consistent lines will facilitate provision of City services. More than one organization may exist within a neighborhood.

POLICY G-5:

Establish and build relationships between staff and neighborhood groups to enhance communication between the two.

PROGRAM G-9:

Where feasible, assist residents with neighborhood improvement, beautification, and planting projects.

PROGRAM G-10:

Work with neighborhood and civic organizations on emergency preparedness and security programs.

See also Policy N-55 and associated programs, and Policy N-53

POLICY G-6:

Support participation by community organizations in the governing process.

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP

GOAL G-3: A Leadership Role on Regional Issues

See also Goal T-9 and associated policies and programs, Policies H-20, H-21, N-2, N-26, C-1, C-2 and C-3, and Programs H-30 and H-31

Many issues affecting Palo Alto are best addressed at the regional level. Palo Alto believes that it has a responsibility to be an active participant as these issues are addressed and resolved. The City will be a leader in regional problem-solving.

POLICY G-7:

Support active participation of City Council members, other City leaders, and City staff in the resolution of regional issues that are relevant to Palo Alto.

Palo Alto should regularly review the benefits of providing and/or sharing resources with neighboring communities upon request and where the City of Palo Alto feels that it is feasible.

POLICY G-8:

Encourage Palo Alto residents and businesses to actively participate in regional programs and organizations.

POLICY G-9:

Recognize that crime is a regional problem and crime prevention requires multi-jurisdictonal cooperation.

GOAL G-4: Active Involvement of Local Citizens as Volunteers in the Delivery of Community Services.

One of Palo Alto's greatest assets is its highly motivated and talented citizenry. Residents offer their time and skills to the City in a variety of capacities ranging from service on boards and commissions to construction of public improvements to delivery of services like recreation and elder care. The City is committed to continued and expanded use of volunteers.

POLICY G-10:

Encourage citizen volunteers, including youth and seniors, to provide community services. Where feasible, allocate City staff time and resources to projects initiated by volunteers that could not otherwise be accomplished.

Photo courtesy of Canopy

The City of Palo Alto encourages volunteerism. Here, members of Canopy: Trees for Palo Alto, are teaching children how oak trees are grown during a tree-planting event at Stanford Shopping Center.

PROGRAM G-11:

Continue and expand programs to enhance opportunities for volunteer assistance.

PROGRAM G-12:

Continue and expand opportunities for public and nonprofit organizations serving the City to provide information about themselves to the public.

PROGRAM G-13:

Continue the program to publicly recognize the efforts of individuals, groups, and businesses who provide volunteer services within the City.

GOAL G-5: New Ways to Encourage Collaboration Among the Public, Property Owners, and the City in Areas where Change is Desired.

Palo Alto intends to uphold its reputation as one of the country's most livable cities. This will require that the City revisit the way that planning and development decisions are made from time to time. Although the City's planning process is already open and inclusive, new ways to fine tune and modernize certain aspects of development review may be desirable. In particular, the process could benefit by providing more opportunities to bring diverse community interests together prior to the design of individual projects. The City has identified the "coordinated area plan" as a tool for achieving this type of participation in the future.

See Programs H-9, L-22, L-25, L-30, L-32 and C-25 for more information on coordinated area plans

POLICY G-11:

Encourage the development of new planning processes that emphasize collaborative exchanges of ideas. Retain City Council authority over decision-making in these processes.

PROGRAM G-14:

Establish a procedure that allows the City Council to initiate coordinated area plans for certain large areas that it has targeted for change.

Over 100 people, including property owners, tenants, and neighborhood residents, participated in planning sessions for Midtown. Midtown was one of several areas that was the subject of focused urban design, traffic, and economic planning during the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Photo courtesy of Palo Alto Weekly

This process should provide early opportunities for all participants—developers, property owners, residents, government representatives, and others. It should also provide a means of informing these participants about urban design and architectural principles, economic realities, neighborhood and citywide priorities, and government regulations. The City Council will provide direction and guidance during the process.

PROGRAM G-15:

Explore opportunities to establish a process for developing precise development or economic revitalization plans for smaller areas, frequently with multiple ownership, where redevelopment, reuse, or redesign is needed.

See Program L-37 and Policy L-40 and associated programs

Some of Palo Alto's commercial centers are considered less successful than others. In such areas, the City should pursue planning processes that bring the City and nearby property owners and tenants together prior to redevelopment.

PROGRAM G-16:

Encourage use of the Preliminary Development Review (pre-screening) Ordinance for specific development proposals that may require changes to current City policies. As appropriate, test and refine application of this Ordinance.

PROCESS MANAGEMENT

See also Goal C-2 and associated policies and programs

GOAL G-6: More Clearly Defined Procedures, Standards, and Expectations for Development Review.

Both the general public and the development community benefit from a development review process that better articulates what kind of development the City has determined to be "desirable." While the outcome of development review can never be guaranteed, it may be possible to improve predictability and reliability. One approach to achieving this goal is to revisit how the City communicates its regulations to the public. Materials that are "user-friendly" and make generous use of illustrations are encouraged.

See also Policy B-16 and associated programs

POLICY G-12:

Assist decision-makers, applicants, and residents with improved tools for understanding planning regulations.

PROGRAM G-17:

Use illustrations and a "form code" to simplify the Zoning Ordinance, to make it more understandable to readers, and to promote well-designed neighborhoods.

The Zoning Ordinance does not always provide a clear picture of physical changes that are allowed or prohibited. When the Ordinance is applied to a particular development site, the results are sometimes disappointing to some participants in the process. To address this predicament, the City may explore alternatives to traditional zoning that make greater use of illustrations to show the intent of the regulations.

A form code is a set of regulations that address the location and physical attributes of building(s) or site(s) by precisely establishing the location and form of structures including setbacks, building heights and other physical features, rather than control development by applying maximum development limits. Form codes typically do not restrict the type of use on a property. However, a form code could be more specific than traditional zoning with respect to site development regulations. For example, instead of creating maximum height and minimum setback restrictions, it could precisely establish required setback distances, number of stories, roof type, and other features relating to the form of the structure on a specific site or multiple sites.

PROGRAM G-18:

Create brief, understandable written materials that guide citizens and businesses through the City review and approval process.

PROGRAM G-19:

Continue and expand customer-oriented process improvement efforts.

The purpose of this effort would be to better incorporate the public's needs in the development review process. In other words, the sequence and review of the process would be made more clear and the criteria by which projects are evaluated would be made more explicit and consistent.

PROGRAM G-20:

Develop, use, and update when necessary, design guidelines for various geographic areas of the City or types of projects to supplement the Architectural Review Board Ordinance.

PROGRAM G-21:

Continually educate and remind policy and decision-makers, staff, and the public about the distinction between quasi-judicial and legislative decision-making.

The distinction between quasi-judicial and legislative land use decision-making is important because constitutional due process principles require different procedures for each type of proceeding. Quasi-judicial proceedings usually involve a hearing required by law and a decision based on findings and evidence presented during the hearing or in writing. Because quasi-judicial matters are based "on the record," decision-makers are limited in their ability to receive information outside the hearing—it is viewed as unfair for such information to be "heard" without all of the affected persons present. This program calls for preparation of educational materials so that the public and decision-makers can better understand these requirements.

Quasi-judicial Proceedings

The City's current prodecures identify the following proceedings as quasi-judicial:

- **Conditional Use Permits**
- **Variances**
- **Home Improvement Exceptions**
- **Design Enhancement Exceptions**
- **Subdivisions, other than final map approval**
- **Architectural Review Board hearings**
- **Assessment protest hearings**
- **Other matters as determined by the City Attorney**

Implementation

Vision Statement

Palo Alto's Implementation Plan is intended to provide an overall sense of the priorities for future actions in support of accomplishing the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. It provides the key mechanism to link Comprehensive Plan implementation to Palo Alto's budget process, and it will ultimately be the yardstick against which Palo Alto can measure its Comprehensive Plan accomplishments.

Introduction

The Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan is the primary tool for guiding the future development of the City. Its Introduction describes the following seven major themes:

- **Building Community and Neighborhoods**
- **Maintaining and Enhancing Community Character**
- **Reducing Reliance on the Automobile**
- **Meeting Housing Supply Challenges**
- **Protecting and Repairing Natural Features**
- **Meeting Residential and Commercial Needs**
- **Providing Responsive Governance and Regional Leadership**

Priorities

While it would be desirable to pursue every program and policy immediately, priorities must be established to focus the City's efforts and to allocate the City's resources (City Council emphasis, staff time and budget resources). At the initiation of this Plan in 1998-1999, the City sees the following three broad priorities.

Zoning Ordinance

The Palo Alto Zoning Ordinance forms a foundation for development and redevelopment in the City, but it has not had a comprehensive update for over twenty years. Nearly fifty of the Comprehensive Plan programs will be addressed by updating the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance has a major focus on Land Use and Community Design, and it touches on all of the seven major themes of the Plan listed above.

An updated Zoning Ordinance will help build a base for dealing with two critical needs in both Palo Alto and the region - housing and transportation. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance can support the Comprehensive Plan's vision to aggressively pursue a variety of housing opportunities that enhance the character, diversity and vitality of the City". Because there is a strong link between land use and transportation, Zoning Ordinance changes can address, in part, our transportation problems by altering underlying land use patterns and encouraging exploration of alternative transportation modes. Work on the Zoning Ordinance began in 1998, and it is planned that the new Zoning Ordinance will be complete within four years.

Transportation Strategy

The Comprehensive Plan calls for a total transportation strategy with emphasis on reducing reliance on the automobile. The strategy includes altering traffic and parking patterns, exploration of a local shuttle system, traffic calming, the allowance of higher density developments near multi-modal transit locations, and seeking regional transportation solutions.

A main objective of the Transportation Strategy is to improve and increase local transit services in the near future. Establishment of a local shuttle system is being explored in 1999, and other local transit services need to be explored and assessed as well. In order to evaluate the most effective actions, cost/benefit analysis should be done for key transportation programs to guide Palo Alto's decisions.

Coordinated Area Plans

The Comprehensive Plan calls for creation of a number of Coordinated Area Plans and smaller area plans to guide evolution of sub-areas of the City. These area plans, too, will address a majority of the Comprehensive Plan's seven themes. A Coordinated Area Plan for the South of Forest Avenue / Palo Alto Medical Foundation (SOFA/PAMF) area is the first. Palo Alto will review the schedule for the remaining area plans based on the experiences with the SOFA/PAMF plan, and will proceed with successive plans as rapidly as is feasible.

Updating the Zoning Ordinance will address many of the issues associated with the need for area plans. Therefore, preparation of area plans should not impinge on resources dedicated to the Zoning Ordinance update.

Implementation Plan Format

There are more than three hundred programs and program-like policies in this Comprehensive Plan. More than half of these programs are "on-going", that is, at the beginning of this Plan have at least some current funding and are being undertaken by staff. Close to one hundred programs are new. Most of new programs come from the Land Use and Community Design Chapter and the Transportation Chapter, which indicates where Palo Alto sees a need for major change and improvement. As noted above, approximately fifty programs relate to the proposed Zoning Ordinance Update.

For each Program, the Implementation Plan matrix defines the *Lead Department* or *Agency*, the *Timing*, the *Financing*, and *Action Areas*. *Timing* indicates when programs will be started and when the majority of the programs will be completed. *Financing* indicates a very broad range of cost and a designation for "on-going" or "one-time" funding. There are six *Action Areas* ranging from "revising or creating new ordinances" to "public outreach and education".

The Comprehensive Plan is being incorporated into the City Budget and the Capital Improvement Program. The Implementation Plan will serve as a tracking system for future review and for continued coordination with budgeting.

Resources

Although Palo Alto would like to implement all these programs during the term of this Plan, there are capital resource and staffing limitations as well as limitations to the amount of work that the City and the City Council can focus on effectively during this period. It is difficult to determine the exact cost of most of the programs and the specific staffing requirements needed to support the scope of future detailed work plans. Issues that cannot be anticipated may arise in the future that may act to divert resources from the programs and priorities of the Comprehensive Plan. It is hoped that by acknowledging and focusing on Comprehensive Plan priorities, the City can avoid distractions and diversion of resources and attention.

Review and Update

The Comprehensive Plan is a living document. Palo Alto's priorities will evolve through the life of this Plan, and therefore changes will need to be made to the Implementation Plan. It will be essential to review the Implementation Plan annually, to make modifications in priorities or schedule, and to measure what has been accomplished. This will be accomplished through the staff directed Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, through an annual report for Planning Commission review and integration of the Comprehensive Plan projects in the City's budget process.

Conclusion

The Implementation Plan was designed to advance the overarching themes of the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan also recognizes the capacity of City resources and the need to focus those resources. It is hoped that the Implementation Plan appropriately addresses those themes, sets priorities for use of resources and creates a framework to answer the question that might be asked in 2010 - "What did the City of Palo Alto do and what actually changed, as a result of the 1998-2010 Comprehensive Plan?"

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

No.	Program *(unless marked as Policy)*	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
L-1	*Maintain and update as appropriate the 1985 Land Use Policies Agreement that sets forth the land use policies of the City, Santa Clara County and Stanford University with regard to Stanford unincorporated lands.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing					■		
L-2	*City staff will monitor Stanford development proposals and traffic conditions within the Sand Hill Road Corridor and annually report to the Planning Commission and City Council.*	Planning/ Planning & Transportation	on going		Existing					■		
L-3	*Maintain and periodically review height and density limits to discourage single uses that are inappropriate in size and scale to the surrounding uses.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update	■		■	
L-4	*Review and change zoning regulations to promote gradual transitions in the scale of development where residential districts abut more intense uses.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-5	*Establish new performance and architectural standards that minimize negative impacts where land use transitions occur.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-6	*Revise the City's Neighborhood Commercial (CN) and Service Commercial (CS) zoning requirements to better address land use transitions.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-7	*Establish a system to monitor the rate of non-residential development and traffic conditions related to both residential and non-residential development at key intersections including those identified in the 1989 Citywide Study and additional intersections identified in the Comprehensive Plan EIR. If the rate of growth reaches the point where the citywide development maximum might be reached, the City will reevaluate development policies and regulations.*	Planning/ Planning & Transportation	0-2		Existing	Grants			■			

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		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
L-8	*Limit new non-residential development in the Downtown area to 350,000 square feet, or 10 percent above the amount of development existing or approved as of May 1986. Re-evaluate this limit when non-residential development approvals reach 235,000 square feet of floor area.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing				■			
L-9	*Continue to monitor development, including the effectiveness of the ground floor retail requirement, in the University Avenue/Downtown area. Keep the Planning Commission and City Council advised of the findings on an annual basis.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing				■			■
L-10	*Create and apply the following four new Mixed Use zoning standards:* . *A "Live/Work" designatin that permits individuals to live on the same site where they work by allowing housing and other uses such as office, retail, and light industrial to co-exist in the same spac, and "Retail/Office"; "Residential/Retail"' and "residential/Office" designations that permit a mix of uses on the same site or nearby sites.* . *Design standards for all mixed use designations providing for buidlings with one to three stories, rear parking, or underground parking, street-facing windows and entries, and zero setback along the street except that front gardens may be provided for ground floor residential uses.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-8		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update	■		■	
L-11	*Establish pedestrian-oriented design guidelines for residences that encourage features that enliven the street.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	0-2		$50,000 - $500,000 one time		■	■	■			

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

No.	Program *(unless marked as Policy)*	General		Financing			Action					
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L-12	*Where compatible with neighborhood character, use Zoning and the Home Improvement Exception Process to create incentives or eliminate obstacles to remodel houses with features that add street life and vitality.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	■
Policy L-13	Evaluate alternative types of housing that increase density and provide more diverse housing opportunities.	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	on going		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-13	*Create and apply zoning standards for Village Residential housing prototypes. Develop design guidelines for duplexes, townhouses, courtyard housing, second units, and small lot that ensure that such housing is compatible with single family neighborhoods and other areas where it may be permitted.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update	■		■	
L-14	*Create and apply zoning standards for Transit-Oriented Residential housing prototypes, including consideration of minimum density standards. Develop design guidelines that ensure that such housing is compatible with single family neighborhoods and other areas where it may be permitted.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-15	*Establish a planning process for Centers that identifies the desired character of the area, its role within the City, the locations of public gathering spaces, appropriate land uses and building forms and important street and pedestrian connections to surrounding Residential Neighborhoods.*	Planning/ Planning	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Grants	■	■	■			
L-16	*Study the feasibility of using public and private funds to provide and maintain landscaping and public spaces such as parks, plazas, and sidewalks within commercial areas.*	Community Services, Public Works & Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing			■			■	

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

No.	Program *(unless marked as Policy)*	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Development Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
L-17	*Through public/private cooperation, provide obvious, clean, and accessible restrooms available for use during normal business hours.*	Community Services, Public Works & Planning/ Planning	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Public/ Private Partnership					■	
L-18	*Identify priority street improvements that would make a substantial contribution to the character of Centers, including widening sidewalks, narrowing travel lanes, creating medians, restriping to allow diagonal parking, and/or planting street trees.*	Planning/ Planning & Public Works	3-7	If proceed, over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership		■	■		■	
L-19	*Support implementation of the Downtown Urban Design Guide.*	Manager's Office	on going	Infrastructure If proceed, over $1,000,000	Existing	Grants, Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership				■	■	■
L-20	*Facilitate reuse of existing buildings.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	
L-21	*Improve the University Avenue/Downtown area by adding landscaping and bicycle parking and encouraging large development projects to benefit the public by incorporating public art.*	Planning/ Planning	on going	$500,000 - $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Public/ Private Partnership					■	
L-22	*Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the SOFA and Palo Alto Medical Foundation (PAMF) site.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Public/ Private Partnership		■				
L-23	*Identify strategies to re-use surface parking lots and improve pedestrian and transit connections at Stanford Shopping Center.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		Existing	Public/ Private Partnership		■		■		
L-24	*Maintain a Stanford Shopping Center development cap of 80,000 square feet of additional development beyond that existing on June 14, 1996.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	

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		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
L-25	*Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area. (See Also T-14)*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership		■	■	■		
L-26	*Establish the following unranked community design priorities for the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station Area:* . *Improving pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and auto connections to create an urban link between University Avenue and Standford Shopping Center.* . *Creating a major civic space at the CalTrain Station that links University Avenue and Palm Drive* . *Infilling underutilized parcels with a mix of uses such as shopping, housing, office, hotel, and medical facilities.* . *Improving public park space.* . *Protecting views of the foothills by guiding building heights and massing.*	Planning/ Planning	0-4		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership		■	■	■		
L-27	*Create regulations for the California Avenue area that allow for the replacement or rehabilitation of smaller buildings while preventing buildings that are out of scale and character with the existing buildings.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-28	*Work with merchants, property owners, and City representatives to create an urban design guide for the California Avenue business district.*	Planning/ Planning	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Public/ Private Partnership		■	■			
L-29	*Revise zoning of the California Avenue business district to reduce the non-residential development potential to levels comparable to other commercial areas in the City while retaining substantial residential development potential.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

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		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
L-30	***Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the Cal-Ventura area. Use the land use diagram from the Community Design Workshop as the starting point for preparing this plan.***	Planning/ Planning	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Public/ Private Partnership		■	■	■		
L-31	***Establish the following*** unranked ***priorities for redevelopment within the Cal-Ventura Area:***	Planning/ Planning	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 *(Includes B-12 & B-17 Costs)* *on going*	Public/ Private Partnership		■	■	■		
	. ***Connect the Cal-Ventura area with the Multi-modal Transit Station and California Avenue. Provide new streets and pedestrian connections that complete the street grid and create a walkable neighborhood.***											
	. ***Fry's Electronics site*** (300 Portage)***: Continued retail activity is anticipated for this site until 2019. A program should be developed for the future use of the site for mixed density multi-family housing and a park or other open space.***											
	. ***Hewlett Packard: Uses that are compatible with the surrounding area and a site plan that facilitates pedestrian use of Park Boulevard.***											
	. ***North of Sheridan Avenue: Development of one or more of the City-owned parking lots with primarily residential uses, provided that public parking spaces are replaced.***											
	. ***Park Boulevard: Streetscape improvements.*** *(Also see B-12 & B-17)*											
L-32	***Prepare a Coordinated Area Plan for the South El Camino Real area. Use the land use map from the Community Design Workshop as a starting point for preparing this Plan.***	Planning/ Planning	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Public/ Private Partnership	■	■	■	■		

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

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L-33	*Study ways to make South El Camino Real more pedestrian-friendly, including redesigning the street to provide wider sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings at key intersections, street trees, and streetscape improvements.*	Planning/ Planning	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Public/ Private Partnership	■	■	■	■		
L-34	*Provide better connections across El Camino Real to bring the Ventura and Barron Park neighborhoods together and to improve linkages to local schools and parks.*	Planning/ Transportation & Community Services	3-7	$50,000 - $500,000	Less than $50,000 one time			■		■		
L-35	*Consider Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) as a tool to encourage redevelopment and/or community-serving amenities along South El Camino Real.*	Planning	8-12		Less than $50,000 one time		■	■	■		■	
L-36	*Evaluate current zoning to determine if it supports the types of uses and scale of buildings considered appropriate in Neighborhood Centers.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-37	*Encourage property owners within Neighborhood Centers to prepare master plans, with the participation of local businesses, property owners and nearby residents.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing	Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership		■	■		■	■
L-38	*Revise land use and zoning designations as needed to encourage medium-density housing (20 to 25 units per acre) within or near Neighborhood Centers served by public transportation to support a more vital mix of commercial activities.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-39	*Prepare a Plan for Midtown with the participation of property owners, local businesses, and nearby residents. Consider the Midtown Economic Study and the land use concept identified during the 1994 Community Design Workshop in developing the plan. The plan should have a special emphasis on public improvements, including parking, street furniture and signage. (Also see L-37)*	Manager's Office	8-12	$50,000 - $500,000	$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership		■	■			

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

No.	Program *(unless marked as Policy)*	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
L-40	***Make improvements to Middlefield Road in Midtown that slow traffic, encourage commercial vitality, make the street more pedestrian-friendly, and unify the east and west sides of the commercial area, with consideration given to traffic impacts on the residential neighborhood.***	Planning/ Transportation	8-12	Infrastructure $500,000 - $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Public/ Private Partnership	■	■			■	
L-41	*Support bicycle and pedestrian trail improvements along a restored Matadero Creek within Hoover Park.*	Planning/ Transportation	8-12	Infrastructure $50,000 - $500,000	Less than $50,000 on going	Grants		■		■		
L-42	***Retain the existing housing along Colorado Avenue and consider increasing the density to allow townhouses, co-housing, and/or housing for the disabled.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-43	*Modify existing zoning regulations and create incentives for employers to provide employee services in their existing buildings - for example, office support services, restaurants, convenience stores, public gathering places, and child care facilities - to reduce the need for employees to drive to these services.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-44	***Design the paths and sidewalks to be attractive and comfortable and consistent with the character of the area where they are located.***	Planning/ Transportation , Public Works, & Community Services	on going	Infrastructure $500,000 - $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 one time			■	■		■	
L-45	*Create and apply zoning standards and design guidelines for commercial hotels and conference centers.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost & less than $50,000 for guidelines one time		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update			■	
L-46	***Work with Stanford to prepare an area plan for the Stanford Medical Center.***	Planning/ Planning	8-12		Less than $50,000 one time	Public/ Private Partnership		■		■	■	
L-47	*Undertake a Community Design workshop for the East Meadow Circle Area.*	Planning/ Planning	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 one time			■				

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

No.	Program *(unless marked as Policy)*	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
L-48	*Use the Zoning Ordinance, design review process, design guidelines, and Coordinated Area Plans to ensure high quality residential and commercial design.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	■
L-49	*In areas of the City having a historic or consistent design character, design new development to maintain and support the existing character.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	
L-50	*Undertake a comprehensive review of residential and commercial zoning requirements to identify additional architectural standards that should be incorporated to implement Policy L-49.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-51	*Use illustrations and form code methods for simplifying the Zoning Ordinance and to promote well-designed buildings.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	0-2		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-52	*Discourage the use of fences that obscure the view of houses.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	on going		Less than $50,000 one time		■	■	■		■	■
L-53	*Promote awards programs and other forms of public recognition for projects of architectural merit that contribute positively to the community.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing							■
L-54	*Review and update the City's Inventory of historic resources, including City-owned structures.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		$50,000 - $500,000 Periodic	Grants		■				
L-55	*Reassess the Historic Preservation Ordinance to ensure its effectiveness in the maintenance and preservation of historic resources, particularly in the University Avenue/Downtown area.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		$50,000 - $500,000 *(Includes L-56 Costs)* one time		■				■	

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

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L-56	*Maintain and strengthen the design review procedure for exterior remodeling or demolition of historic resources. Discourage demolition of historic resources and severely restrict demolition of Landmark resources.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		Included in L-55 Cost		■				■	
L-57	*Encourage salvage of discarded historic building materials for re-use by the community.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing		■		■		■	■
L-58	*For proposed exterior alterations or additions to designated Historic Landmarks, require design review findings that the proposed changes are in compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		$50,000 - $500,000 on going		■				■	
L-59	*Allow parking exemptions for historic buildings to encourage rehabilitation. Require design review findings that the historic integrity of the building exterior will be maintained.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		Existing						■	
L-60	*Continue to use a TDR Ordinance to allow the transfer of development rights from designated buildings of historic significance in the Commercial Downtown (CD) zone to non-historic receiver sites in the CD zone. Planned Community (PC) zone properties in the Downtown also qualify for this program.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing	Grants					■	■
L-61	*Allow nonconforming uses for the life of historic buildings.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	on going		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update			■	
L-62	*Promote awards programs and other forms of public recognition for exemplary Historic Preservation projects.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing							■

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

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L-63	*Streamline to the maximum extent feasible, any future processes for design review of historic structures to eliminate unnecessary delay and uncertainty for the applicant and to encourage historic preservation.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		Existing		■				■	■
L-64	*Encourage and assist owners of historically significant buildings in finding ways to adapt and restore these buildings, including participation in state and federal tax relief programs.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	on going		Existing		■	■				■
L-65	*Seek additional innovative ways to apply current codes and ordinances to older buildings. Use the State Historic Building Code for designated historic buildings.*	Planning/ Inspection Services	0-2		Existing						■	
L-66	*Revise existing zoning and permit regulations as needed to minimize constraints to adaptive re-use, particularly in retail areas.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-67	*Using the archaeological sensitivity map in the Comprehensive Plan as a guide, continue to assess the need for archaeological surveys and mitigation plans on a project by project basis, consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act and the National Historic Preservation Act.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	
L-68	*To help satisfy present and future community use needs, coordinate with the School District to educate the public about and to plan for the future use of school sites, including providing space for public gathering places for neighborhoods lacking space.*	City Manager, Community Services, & Planning/ Planning	on going	$50,000 - $500,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going			■		■		■
L-69	*Enhance all entrances to Mitchell Park Community Center so that they are more inviting and facilitate public gatherings.*	Community Services	0-7	Infrastructure $50,000 - $500,000	Less than $50,000 on going			■				

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

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L-70	***Study the potential for landscaping or park furniture that would promote neighborhood parks as outdoor gathering places and centers of neighborhood activity.***	Community Services	on going		Less than $50,000 on going			■				
Policy L-62	Provide comfortable seating areas and plazas with places for public art adjacent to library and community center entrances. *(Also see C-23)*	Public Works/Community Services	0-12	Infrastructure $500,000 - $1,000,000	Less than $50,000 on going	Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership		■			■	
L-71	***Recognize Sand Hill Road, University Avenue, Embarcadero Road, Page Mill Road, Oregon Expressway, Interstate 280, Arastradero Road (west of Foothill Expressway), Junipero Serra Boulevard/Foothill Expressway, and Skyline Boulevard as scenic routes.***	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	
Policy L-70	Enhance the appearance of streets and other public spaces by expanding and maintaining Palo Alto's street tree system.	Public Works	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Public/ Private Partnership					■	■
L-72	***Develop a strategy to enhance gateway sites with special landscaping, art, public spaces, and/or public buildings. Emphasize the creek bridges and riparian settings at the entrances to the City over Adobe Creek and San Francisquito Creek. (Also see T-41 & T-42)***	Planning/ Planning, Public Works, & Community Services	on going	$500,000 - $1,000,000		Grants		■	■	■	■	
L-73	***Revise the Zoning Ordinance to require the location of parking lots behind buildings rather in front of them, under appropriate conditions.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-74	***Modify zoning standards pertaining to parking lot layout and landscaping for land uses within Employment Districts.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
L-75	***Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments for parking lot landscaping, including requiring a variety of drought-tolerant, relatively litter-free tree species capable of forming a 50 percent tree canopy within 10 to 15 years. Consider further***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				

2 Land Use and Community Design Implementation Plan

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	amendments that would require existing nonconforming lots to come into compliance wherever possible.											
L-76	***Evaluate parking requirements and actual parking needs for specific uses. Develop design criteria based on a standard somewhere between average and peak conditions.***	Planning/ Transportation & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update	■		■	
L-77	***Revise parking requirements to encourage creative solutions such as valet parking, landscaped parking reserves, satellite parking, and others that minimize the use of open land for parking.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	■			■	
L-78	***Encourage the use of Planned Community (PC) zoning for parking structures Downtown and in the California Avenue area.***	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing	Assessments, Fees, Charges & Public/ Private Partnership		■			■	
L-79	***Undertake a coordinated effort by the Public Works, Utilities, and Planning Departments to establish design standards for public infrastructure and examine the effectiveness of City street, sidewalk and street tree maintenance programs.***	Public Works	0-7		$50,000 - $500,000 one time			■	■			
L-80	***Continue the citywide undergrounding of utility wires. Minimize the impacts of undergrounding on street tree root systems and planting areas.***	Utilities	on going	Infrastructure over $1,000,000 *(Utilities)*	Existing *(Utilities)*			■	■			
L-81	***Encourage the use of compact and well-designed utility elements, such as transformers, switching devices, and back flow preventers. Place these elements in locations that will minimize their visual intrusion.***	Utilities	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*				■		■	

3 Transportation Implementation Plan

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T-1	*Encourage infill, redevelopment, and re-use of vacant or underutilized parcels employing minimum density requirements that are appropriate to support transit, bicycling, and walking.*	Planning/ Planning	3-7		Existing		■				■	
T-2	*Promote mixed use development to provide housing and commercial services near employment centers, thereby reducing the necessity of driving.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing		■				■	
T-3	*Locate higher density development along transit corridors and near intermodal transit stations.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update			■	
T-4	*Consider the use of additional parking fees and tax revenues to fund alternative transportation projects.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7		Existing	Grants, Fees, Charges, & Other	■	■				
T-5	*Work with private interests such as the Chamber of Commerce and major institutions to develop and coordinate trip reduction strategies.*	Human Resources & Stanford	on going		Existing					■		■
T-6	*Expand Palo Alto's car pooling incentive programs.*	Human Resources	on going		Existing					■		■
T-7	*Encourage the Palo Alto Unified School District to use parking fees, regulations, and education to discourage students from driving to school.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		
T-8	*Create a long-term education program to change the travel habits of residents, visitors and workers by informing them about transportation alternatives, incentives and impacts. Work with the Palo Alto Unified School District and with private interests such as the Chamber of Commerce to develop and implement this program.*	Planning/ Transportation & Police Dept.	0-7		$50,000-$500,000 on going							■

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T-9	*Support the development of regional on-line transportation information services to provide current information on transit, parking, and roadway conditions, as well as computerized trip planning. Provide information kiosks at locations such as University and California Avenues*		Planning/ Transportation	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Public/ Private Partnership				■		■
T-10	*Expand the range of City services that can be received via computers or through the mail.*		Admin. Services/ Information Technology Services	on going		$50,000- $500,000 on going			■				■
T-11	*Promote private delivery services to reduce the necessity of driving.*		Human Resources	on going		Existing					■		■
T-12	*Encourage telecommuting, satellite office concepts, and work-at-home options.*		Human Resources	on going		Existing					■		■
T-13	*Establish a jitney bus system similar to Stanford University's Marguerite Shuttle.*	Pase I	Planning/ Transportation	0-2		$50,000 - $500,000 one time			■		■		■
		Phase II	Planning/ Transportation	3-7		over $1,000,000 on going	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership		■		■		■
T-14	*Pursue development of the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station conceptual plan based on the 1993-94 design study.*	Phase I	Planning/ Transportation	0-2		Included in L-25 Cost	Included in L-25 Cost		■		■		
	(Also see L-25)	Phase II	Public Works	3-7	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	Less than $50,000 one time	Grants, Assess-ments, & Other				■	■	
T-15	*Improve the environment at the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station, including connecting tunnels, through short-term improvements and regular maintenance.*		Planning/ Transportation & Public Works	0-2	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	Less than $50,000 on going	Public/ Private Partnership				■		

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T-16	*Evaluate the extension of a light rail line along El Camino Real from Mountain View through Palo Alto to Menlo Park.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7		Less than $50,000 one time					■		
T-17	*Support CalTrain electrification and its extension to downtown San Francisco.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		
Policy T-10	Encourage amenities such as seating, lighting, and signage at bus stops to increase rider comfort and safety.	Public Works	on going	$500,000 - $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going				■	■		
Policy T-11	Support efforts to integrate train, bus, and shuttle schedules at multi-modal transit stations to make public transit more time efficient.	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		■
Policy T-12	Support efforts to decrease wait times for intercity transit to a maximum of 20 minutes between 6:00 AM and 10:00 PM. Design for a maximum wait time of 12 minutes for intra-city transit, if feasible.	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		
T-18	*Develop and periodically update a comprehensive bicycle plan.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7		Existing	Grants & Other		■		■		■
T-19	*Develop, periodically update, and implement street, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities programs that identify and prioritize critical pedestrian and bicycle links to parks, schools, retail centers, and civic facilities.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	Existing			■				
T-20	*Periodically produce a local area bicycle route map, jointly with adjacent jurisdictions.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7		Existing					■		■
T-21	*Study projects to depress bikeways and pedestrian walkways under Alma Street and the CalTrain tracks and implement if feasible.*	Planning/ Transportation	8-12	over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Grants & Other		■		■		

3 Transportation Implementation Plan

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T-22	*Implement a network of bicycle boulevards, including extension of the southern end of the Bryant Street bicycle boulevard into Mountain View. (Also see T-19)*	Planning/ Transportation	8-12	over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Grants & Other		■				
T-23	*Develop public sidewalks and bicycle facilities in Stanford Research Park and other employment areas.*	Public Works	8-12	Infrastructure $500,000 - $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership				■		
T-24	*Provide adequate outside through-lane widths for shared use by motorists and bicyclists when constructing or modifying roadways, where feasible.*	Public Works	on going	Existing *(SIF & GF)*	Existing				■			
T-25	*Evaluate the design of a Bay-to-Foothills path.*	Planning/ Transportation	8-12		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Grants		■		■		
T-26	*Complete development of the Bay Trail and Ridge Trail in Palo Alto.*	Community Services/ Parks	on going		Existing					■	■	
T-27	*Work with CalTrain, Amtrak, and public bus operators to expand bicycle storage on public transit vehicles during both peak and off-peak hours.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		
T-28	*Adjust the street evaluation criteria of the City's Pavement Management Program to ensure that areas of the road used by bicyclists are maintained at the same standards as, or at standards higher than, areas used by motor vehicles.*	Public Works	0-12	$50,000 - $500,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going				■			
T-29	*Provide regular maintenance of off-road bicycle and pedestrian paths, including sweeping, weed abatement, and pavement maintenance.*	Public Works & Community Serices	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 on going							

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T-30	***Develop cooperative programs with the City and businesses to keep sidewalks clean in the University Avenue and California Avenue business districts, and other centers.***	Public Works	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Public/ Private Partnership						■
T-31	*Test the Urban Design Guide emphasis on the use of alleyways for pedestrian- and bicycle-only use. Allow controlled vehicle access for loading and unloading where no alternatives exist.*	Planning/ Planning	3-7		Existing	Public/ Private Partnership			■			
Policy T-22	Improve amenities such as seating, lighting, bicycle parking, street trees, and interpretive stations along bicycle and pedestrian paths and in City parks to encourage walking and cycling and enhance the feeling of safety.	Planning/ Planning; CSD/ Parks & Public Works	on going	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Public/ Private Partnership					■	
T-32	*Improve pedestrian crossings with bulb outs, small curb radii, street trees near corners, bollards, and landscaping to create protected areas.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Grants, Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership		■	■			
T-33	*Develop comprehensive roadway design standards and criteria for all types of roads. Emphasize bicycle and pedestrian safety and usability in these standards.*	Public Works	0-7		Existing *(SIF & GF)*				■			
T-34	*Establish procedures for considering the effects of street modifications on emergency vehicle response time.*	Fire/Police	0-7		Existing				■			
T-35	*Consider increased public transit, a shuttle, and other traffic and parking solutions to ensure safe, convenient access to the Stanford Shopping Center/Medical Center area.*	Planning/ Transportation & Stanford	0-7		Existing	Stanford Grants				■		

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T-36	*Extend Sand Hill Road to El Camino Real and construct related improvements consistent with neighborhood and community interests. Do not extend Sand Hill Road to Alma Street.*	Planning/ Planning	0-7		Existing	Stanford					■	
T-37	*Provide safe, convenient pedestrian, bicycle, and shuttle connections between the Stanford Shopping Center and Medical Center areas and future housing along the Sand Hill Road corridor, the University Avenue Multi-modal Transit Station, Downtown Palo Alto, and other primary destinations.*	Planning/ Transportation & Stanford	0-7		Existing	Stanford					■	
T-38	*Implement computerized traffic management systems to improve traffic flow when feasible.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7	Infrastructure $500,000 - $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Grants		■		■		
T-39	*Maintain the current program of not adding traffic signals on: Alma Street north of Lytton Avenue and south of Channing Avenue, on Middlefield Road north of Lytton Avenue and south of Channing Avenue to Embarcadero Road.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing *(SIF)*				■			
T-40	*Evaluate the feasibility of changes to Palo Alto's through truck routes and weight limits to consider such issues as relationship to neighboring jurisdictions, lower weight limits, increased number of routes, and economic and environmental impacts.*	Planning/ Transportation & Police	0-7		$50,000 - $500,000 one time			■		■		
T-41	*The following roadways are designated as residential arterials. Treat these streets with landscaping and other visual improvements to distinguish them as residential streets.* . *Middlefield Road (between San Francisquito Creek and San Antonio Road)* . *University Avenue (between San Francisquito Creek and Middlefield Road)* . *Embarcadero Road (between Alma Street and West Bayshore Road)*	Planning/ Transportation	0-12	over $1,000,000	$500,000 - $1,000,000 on going			■	■	■		■

3 Transportation Implementation Plan

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.	*Charleston/Arastradero Roads (between Miranda Avenue and Fabian Way)*											
T-42	*Use landscaping and other improvements to establish clear "gateways" at the points where University Avenue and Embarcadero Road transition from freeways to neighborhoods.*	Planning/ Planning	8-12	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	Included in L-72 & T-41 Cost	Grants, Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership		■	■			■
Policy T-31	Evaluate smoothing and slowing traffic flow in commercial areas by reducing through-traffic lanes and trading the area for improved turning lanes, landscaping, and bicycle lanes.	Planning/ Transportation	8-12		Existing			■				
T-43	*Establish a Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program to implement appropriate traffic calming measures. Consider using development fees as a funding source for this program.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7	$50,000 - $500,000	Existing				■	■		■
T-44	*Evaluate changing Homer and Channing Avenues to two-way streets with or without redevelopment of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation campus.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-2	$50,000 - $500,000				■				
Policy T-36	Make new and replacement curbs vertical where desired by neighborhood residents.	Public Works	on going	over $1,000,000	Existing *(SIF)*							
Policy T-37	Where sidewalks are directly adjacent to curbs and no planting strip exists, explore ways to add planting pockets with street trees to increase shade and reduce the apparent width of wide streets.	Public Works	8-12	$50,000 - $500,000	$50,000 - $500,000 one time							
T-45	*Provide adult crossing guards at school crossings that meet adopted criteria.*	Police & Palo Alto Unified School District	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Other			■	■		■

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T-46	*Encourage extensive educational programs for the safe use of bicycles, mopeds, and motorcycles, including the City-sponsored bicycle education programs in the public schools and the bicycle traffic school program for juveniles.*	Fire/Police	on going		Existing					■		■
T-47	*Utilize engineering, enforcement, and educational tools to improve traffic safety on City roadways.*	Police/ Transportation	on going		Existing				■			■
T-48	*Monitor Santa Clara County's paratransit program to assess its adequacy.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		
T-49	*Implement a comprehensive program of parking supply and demand management strategies for Downtown Palo Alto.*	Police, Planning/ Transportation & Public Works	0-7	Infrastructure over $1,000,000 Assessment District	$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Assessments, Fees, Charges & Debt Financing		■	■	■		■
T-50	*Continue working with merchants, the Chamber of Commerce, neighbors, and a parking consultant to explore options for constructing new parking facilities or using existing parking more efficiently.*	Police & Planning/ Transportation	0-7	Included in T-49 Cost	Included in T-49 Cost	Included in T-49 Cost		■		■		■
T-51	*Work with merchants to designate dedicated employee parking areas.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		■
T-52	*Evaluate options to ensure maximum use of the City parking structures in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue areas.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7		Existing					■		
T-53	*Discourage parking facilities that would intrude into adjacent residential neighborhoods.*	Planning/ Planning & Police	on going		Existing						■	
T-54	*Work regionally, and in particular with adjacent communities, to establish a system of parking fees that discourages single-occupant vehicle use and encourages other transportation modes.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7		Existing					■		■

3 Transportation Implementation Plan

No.	Program *(unless marked as Policy)*	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
T-55	*Support provision of a new southbound entrance ramp to Highway 101 from San Antonio Road, in conjunction with the closure of the southbound Charleston Road on-ramp at the Rengstorff Avenue interchange in Mountain View.*	Planning/ Transportation	0-7		Existing					■		
T-56	*Implement, as appropriate, the "local action list" of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and work with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's Congestion Management Program (CMP). Work with the CMP and other jurisdictions to implement those actions that require a multi-jurisdictional effort.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing					■		
T-57	*Provide a planting strip and bicycle/pedestrian path adjacent to Embarcadero Road that is consistent with the open space character of the baylands.*	Planning/ Planning & Community Services	8-12	Infrastructure $50,000 - $500,000	Less than $50,000 on going	Assessments & Public/ Private Partnership		■		■	■	
T-58	*Encourage Santa Clara County to relocate the terminal building away from the Runway 31 clear zone, allowing for construction of a new terminal.*	Planning/ Planning	8-12			County				■	■	

4 Housing Implementation Plan

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		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
H-1	***Allow for increased housing density immediately surrounding commercial areas and particularly near transit centers.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-2	***Consider enacting minimum density requirements in multiple family zones.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-3	***Evaluate zoning incentives that encourage the development of diverse housing types, including smaller, more affordable units and two- and three-bedroom units suitable for families with children.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-4	***Evaluate the provisions for second dwelling units in single family areas to determine how additional units might be provided.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-5	***Create a Planned Development zone that allows the construction of smaller lot single family units and other innovative housing types without the requirement for a public benefit finding.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-6	***Amend zoning regulations to permit residential lots of less than 6,000 square feet where smaller lots would be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-7	***Modify parking requirements to allow higher densities and reduced housing costs in areas appropriate for reduced parking requirements.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-8	***Evaluate the effectiveness of existing incentives that encourage mixed use and residential development on commercially zoned land and determine additional incentives to be provided.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				

4 Housing Implementation Plan

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H-9	*Use coordinated area plans and other tools to develop regulations that support the development of housing above and among commercial uses.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	on going		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost & Coordinated Area Plan		■	■				
H-10	*Encourage the development of housing on parking lots by adopting incentives that will lead to housing production while maintaining the required parking.*	Planning/ Planning	3-7		Less than $50,000 one time		■	■	■		■	
H-11	*Eliminate the requirement for Site and Design review for mixed use projects.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-12	*Where appropriate and feasible, allow waivers of development fees as a means of promoting the development of housing affordable to very low- and low-income households.*	City Attorney	on going		Existing		■		■		■	
H-13	*Continue the citywide property maintenance, inspection, and enforcement program.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing				■		■	■
H-14	*Enact development regulations that encourage rehabilitation of historic residential buildings, remodeling of older multifamily rental buildings and retention of smaller single family residences.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
H-15	*Continue implementation of the Condominium Conversion Ordinance.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing				■		■	
H-16.	*Where a proposed subdivision or condominium would cause a loss of rental housing, grant approval only if at least two of the following three circumstances exist:*											
	. *The project will produce at least a 100 percent increase in the number of units currently on the site and will comply with the City's BMR program (described in Program H-20); and/or*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	

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	. *The number of rental units to be provided on the site is at least equal to the number of existing rental units; and/or* . *No less that 20 percent of the units will comply with the City's BMR program.*											
H-17	*Create community volunteer days and park clean-ups, plantings, or similar events that promote neighborhood enhancement.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing	Grants				■		■
H-18	*Conduct City-sponsored cleanup campaigns for public and private properties.*	Public Works & Community Services	on going		Less than $50,000 *(GF & Utilities) on going*					■		■
H-19	*Implement the "Action Plan" of the City of Palo Alto's Consolidated Plan or its successor documents.*	Planning/ Planning	0-12		Existing	Grants			■	■	■	
H-20	*Continue implementation of the City's "Below Market Rate" (BMR) Inclusionary Housing Program that requires at least 10 percent of all housing units built in for-sale projects of three units or more and rental projects of five units or more to be provided at below market rates to very low-, low- and moderate-income households.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	
H-21	*Adopt a revised density bonus program that allows the construction of up to three additional market rate units for each BMR unit above that normally required, up to a maximum zoning increase of 25 percent in density. Allow an equivalent increase in square footage (FAR) for projects that meet this requirement.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update			■	
H-22	*Recognize the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park as providing low- and moderate-income housing opportunities.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	

4 Housing Implementation Plan

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H-23	*Promote legislative changes and funding for programs that facilitate and subsidize the acquisition, rehabilitation and operation of existing rental housing by housing assistance organizations, nonprofit developers, and for-profit developers.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing					■		■
H-24	*Use existing agency programs such as Senior Home Repair to provide rehabilitation assistance to very low- and low-income households.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing	Grants				■		
H-25	*Support the preservation of existing group homes and supported living facilities for persons with special housing needs. Assist local agencies and nonprofit organizations in the construction or rehabilitation of new facilities for this population.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing	Grants				■	■	
H-26	*Maintain a high priority for acquisition of new housing sites, acquisition and rehabilitation of existing housing, and housing-related services in the allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds or similar programs.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing	Grants		■		■		
H-27	*Support and expand the City's Housing Development Fund or successor program.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	on going		Existing		■				■	
H-28	*On an on-going basis, seek funding from state and federal programs, such as the HOME Program and HUD Section 202 and 811 programs (or successor programs), to support the development or rehabilitation of housing for very low-, low- and moderate-income households.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing	Grants & Fees				■	■	
H-29	*Continue to require developers of employment-generating commercial and industrial developments to contribute to the supply of low- and moderate-income housing.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	

4 Housing Implementation Plan

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H-30	***Continue to participate in the Santa Clara County Homeless Collaborative as well as work with adjacent jurisdictions to develop additional shelter opportunities.***	Community Services & Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing	Grants				■		
H-31	***Continue to participate with and support agencies addressing homelessness.***	Community Services	on going		Existing	Grants				■		
H-32	***Work with appropriate state and federal agencies to ensure that fair housing laws are enforced.***	Planning/ Planning, Attorney's Office & Community Services	on going		Existing	Grants				■		
H-33	***Continue to support groups that provide fair housing services, such as Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing.***	Planning/ Planning & Community Services	on going		Existing	Grants						■
H-34	***Continue the efforts of the Human Relations Commission to combat discrimination in rental housing, including mediation of problems between landlords and tenants.***	Community Services	on going		Existing							■
H-35	***Continue implementation of the City's Ordinances prohibiting discrimination in renting or leasing housing based on age, parenthood, pregnancy or the potential or actual presence of a minor child.***	Community Services & Attorney's Office	on going		Existing							■
H-36	***Continue providing staff support and technical assistance in energy conservation and demand management to architects, developer and utility customers.***	Utilities	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*				■		■	■

5 Natural Environment Implementation Plan

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N-1	*Review and update as needed the Open Space (OS) zoning district regulations to ensure consistency with Comprehensive Plan policies.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
N-2	*Examine and improve management practices for natural habitat and open space areas, including the provision of access to open space for City vehicles and equipment, to ensure that natural resources are protected.*	Community Services	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Stewardship		■	■	■		■
N-3	*Review the need for access controls in environmentally sensitive areas, including the baylands, foothills, and riparian corridors.*	Community Services	on going		Existing	Grants & Stewardship		■	■	■		■
N-4	*Seek additional sources of funding, including state and federal programs, to finance open space acquisition and development.*	Community Services	on going		Existing					■		
N-5	*Work to maintain Williamson Act agricultural preserves within the City.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	
N-6	*As part of the design review process for proposed development in the Open Space zone district that exceeds 6,500 square feet, require that "story poles" be erected with outlining tape depicting the building's location, bulk and height to aid in assessing the potential visual impacts of the proposed project.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	on going		Existing		■				■	

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N-7	*Adopt a setback along natural creeks that prohibits the siting of buildings and other structures, impervious surfaces, outdoor activity areas, and ornamental landscaped areas within 100 feet from the top of a creek bank. Allow passive or intermittent outdoor activities and pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle pathways where there are adequate setbacks to protect the natural riparian environment. Within the setback area, provide border of native riparian vegetation at least 25 feet along the creek bank. Exception to the 100-foot setback are as follows:* . *Single family property is exempt from the 100-foot setback, except that undeveloped parcels west of Highway 280 are not exempt. A creek ordinance and guidelines will be prepared addressing appropriate setbacks and creek conservation measures.* . *Existing development within the 100-foot setback will be considered legal and nonconforming. With the 100-foot setback as a goal where feasible, redevelopment of such sites must be designed consistently with basic creek habitat objectives and make a significant net improvement in the condition of the creek.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update			■	
N-8	*Develop and adopt a creek ordinance that establishes new development regulations for properties abutting creeks, establishes an exception process, and provides incentives to achieve maximum creek setbacks, such as reduced front yard setbacks and reduced on-site parking requirements.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update			■	
N-9	*Participate in a San Francisquito Creek Coordinated Resource Management and Planning (CRMP) process with adjacent cities.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing					■		■

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N-10	*Work with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to establish guidelines for creek channel maintenance that encourage preservation of riparian habitat, including vegetation that provides shade to creek bottoms.*	Public Works & Community Services	0-12		Less than $50,000				■	■	■	
N-11	*Work with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to develop a comprehensive riparian corridor restoration and enhancement program that identifies specific stretches of corridor to be restored, standards to be achieved, and sources of funding. Include provisions for tree planting to enhance natural habitat*	Public Works	0-7	Infrastructure $500,000 - $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Grants & Other		■	■	■		
N-12	*Review and update the Grading Ordinance to ensure that it adequately protects creeks from the erosion and sedimentation impacts of grading.*	Public Works	0-7		Existing		■					
N-13	*Establish public education programs regarding the conservation of creeks and riparian areas.*	Public Works & Community Services	0-12		Less than $50,000 Periodic	Grants				■		■
N-14	*Implement the recommendations of the Tree Task Force.*	Public Works	0-7		$500,000 - $1,000,000 on going	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership			■	■	■	■
N-15	*Continue celebration of Arbor Day in Palo Alto.*	Public Works	on going		Existing							■
N-16	*Continue to require replacement of trees, including street trees lost to new development, and establish a program to have replacement trees planted offsite when it is impractical to locate them onsite.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing		■		■		■	
N-17	*Develop and implement a plan for maintenance, irrigation, and replacement of trees in parks, parking lots, and City rights-of-way.*	Public Works & Community Services	0-7	$500,000 - $1,000,000	Less than $50,000 on going			■	■			■

5 Natural Environment Implementation Plan

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N-18	*Actively pursue funding for tree planting.*	Public Works	on going		Existing	Grants				■		
N-19	*Establish one or more tree planting programs that seek to achieve the following objectives:* · *a 50 percent tree canopy cover for streets, parks, and parking lots; and* · *the annual tree planting goals recommended by the Tree Task Force and adopted by the City Council.* *(Also see N-14)*	Public Works	on going		Included in N-14 Cost	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership			■		■	■
Policy N-16	Provide on-going education for City staff, homeowners, and developers regarding landscaping and irrigation practices that protect the urban forest.	Public Works	on going		Existing							■
N-20	*Establish procedures to coordinate City review, particularly by the Planning, Utilities, and Public Works Departments, of projects that might impact the urban forest.*	Planning/ Planning	0-7		Existing				■		■	
N-21	*Work cooperatively with the Palo Alto Unified School District so that their tree planting and maintenance practices are consistent with City guidelines.*	Public Works & Community Services	on going		Existing					■		
N-22	*Work with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to identify and map key groundwater recharge areas for use in land use planning and permitting and the protection of groundwater resources.*	Utilities	0-7		Existing *(Utilities)*			■		■		
N-23	*Regularly review the water rate structure to ensure that it encourages efficiency and is competitive.*	Utilities	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*		■					

5 Natural Environment Implementation Plan

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N-24	*Maintain citywide water conservation and efficiency programs for all customer classes.*	Utilities	on going		Existing (Utilities)				■		■	■
N-25	*Where practical, incorporate federal, state, and other agency policies and standards for water efficiency into City codes, regulations, and procedures.*	Utilities	on going		Existing (Utilities)		■		■	■	■	
N-26	*Implement incentives for the use of drought-tolerant landscaping and recycled water for landscape irrigation.*	Utilities	0-7		Existing (Utilities)	Public/ Private Partnership			■		■	■
N-27	*Work with regulatory agencies, environmental groups, affected businesses, and other stakeholders to identify economically viable Best Management Practices (BMP) for reducing pollution. Participate in BMP pilot studies to identify new pollution control measures.*	Public Works	on going		Existing (Utilities)		■	■	■	■	■	■
N-28	*Continue public education programs on water quality issues, including Best Management Practices for residents, businesses, contractors, and City employees.*	Public Works	on going		Existing (Utilities)					■		■
N-29	*Actively participate in programs such as the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Control program to improve the quality of storm water runoff.*	Public Works	on going		Existing (Utilities)				■	■	■	
N-30	*Conduct regular street-sweeping to minimize road surface pollutant runoff.*	Public Works	on going		Existing (Refuse)							
N-31	*Evaluate spill response, cleanup, and follow-up investigation procedures to reduce the impacts of toxic spills on water quality in the City's creeks and San Francisco Bay.*	Fire	on going		Existing				■	■		

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N-32	*Actively work to reduce the amount of metals contained in brake pads, tires, and other automotive parts, thereby reducing urban runoff pollution from metals. Continue Palo Alto's leadership role in encouraging the re-engineering of vehicles to reduce pollution from metals.*	Public Works	on going		Less than $50,000 *(WQCP) on going*		■	■	■	■		■
N-33	*Study the impacts on storm water pollution of architectural copper and consider limiting its use, if warranted.*	Public Works	0-7		Existing (Utilities)			■			■	
N-34	*Evaluate the use of permeable paving materials that allow for natural percolation and site drainage.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(WQCP)*				■		■	■
N-35	*Work with commercial and industrial dischargers to recover metals on-site rather than discharging them into the sanitary sewer system.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(WQCP)*				■			■
N-36	*Complete improvements to the storm drainage system consistent with the priorities outlined in the City's 1993 Storm Drainage Master Plan, provided that an appropriate funding mechanism is identified and approved by the City Council.*	Public Works	on going	Infrastructure over $1,000,000 *(Utilities)*	$500,000 - $1,000,000 *(Utilities) on going*	Assessments & Debt Financing				■		
N-37	*Monitor wastewater treatment industry practices relating to the use of chlorine to disinfect wastewater.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*				■			
N-38	*Provide City input on significant proposals for air quality legislation and state implementation plans.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing					■		■
N-39	*Assist the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) in its efforts to achieve compliance with existing air quality regulations.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing					■	■	

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N-40	*Expand the use of alternative fuels for City vehicles and establish a program to encourage expanded use of such fuels in private vehicles. To support this program, encourage the development of alternative fuel infrastructure (for instance, electric plug-ins) in parking facilities and other key locations around the city.*	Public Works, Planning/ Planning & Utilities	on going	$50,000 - $500,000	Existing (GF & Utilities)	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership			■	■	■	■
N-41	*Support legislative programs that result in the removal of the oldest and dirtiest vehicles on the roadway.*	Public Works	on going		Existing (GF & Utilities)					■		■
N-42	*Require all new wood-burning stoves or fireplace inserts to comply with EPA-approved standards.*	Planning/ Inspection Services	0-7		Existing		■				■	
N-43	*Provide a homeowner handout outlining low emission alternatives to wood-burning stoves or fireplaces.*	Public Works/ WQCP/ Planning/ Inspection Services	0-7		Existing							■
N-44	*Develop public information programs to educate the public on Best Management Practices in the use of wood burning appliances, including reduction of wood burning during critical periods of poor air quality.*	Fire	0-7		Existing				■	■		■
N-45	*Recommend revisions to proposed projects as needed to reduce air quality impacts, including improvements that reduce single occupant vehicle use.*	Planning/ Transportation & Planning	on going		Existing						■	
N-46	*Provide information to all user groups about:* *. commonly used hazardous materials;* *. more environmentally friendly alternatives; and* *. safe recycling and disposal methods.*	Fire	on going		Existing				■	■		■

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N-47	*Continue City permitting procedures for commercial and industrial storage, use, and handling of hazardous materials.*	Fire	on going		Existing				■		■	
N-48	*Continue sponsoring a regular household hazardous waste collection event.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*							■
N-49	*Study the relative costs, advantages, and disadvantages of joining the regional household hazardous waste program operated by the Santa Clara County Department of Environmental Health.*	Public Works	8-12		Existing *(Utilities)*			■				
N-50	*Continue the program that allows small quantity generators to dispose of hazardous waste at cost.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*							■
N-51	*Regularly review the landfill fee structure to ensure that it encourages a reduction in solid waste disposal.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*		■		■			
N-52	*Improve City composting practices and continue promoting a household composting program.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*				■			■
N-53	*Continue to develop source separation programs for recyclable solid waste materials for all waste generators.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*				■			
N-54	*Continue to develop long-term solid waste management programs that include safe and environmentally sound disposal methods such as the SMaRT Station.*	Public Works	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*			■	■	■		
N-55	*Maintain and expand the use of the Recycling Center at the City's refuse disposal area.*	Public Works	on going	$500,000 - $1,000,000 *(Refuse)*	Existing *(Utilities)*			■				■

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N-56	*Participate in appropriate public forums to ensure that future activities at large commercial airports in the region do not negatively effect noise levels in Palo Alto.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		■
N-57	*Encourage the Joint Powers Board to pursue technologies to reduce train whistle noise in communities served by CalTrain.*	Planning/ Transportation	on going		Existing					■		
N-58	*Continue to work to reduce noise impacts created by events and activities taking place in adjoining communities.*	Manager's Office/ Attorney's Office & Public Works	on going		Existing				■	■		■
N-59	*Evaluate the feasibility of adopting noise criteria in the purchase of new City vehicles and equipment.*	Public Works	0-7		Existing			■				
N-60	*Update the Noise Ordinance to provide for clear interpretation of the regulations, and to review the appropriateness of existing standards. Strictly enforce the Noise Ordinance.*	Police/ Planning	0-7		Less than $50,000 on going		■		■			
N- 61	*Evaluate changes to the Noise Ordinance to reduce the impact of leaf blower noise.*	Police	0-7		Existing		■	■	■			
N-62	*Implement gas and electric rate structures that encourage energy conservation and that are in balance with other rate-making objectives, such as providing competitive rates. Set rates to achieve a balance between actual service costs, market prices, and the goal of promoting conservation and efficient use. Continue to provide a baseline service rate.*	Utilities	on going		Existing *(Utilities)*		■					

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Policy N-45	Continually evaluate and revise forecasts for electric power demand. Pursue adequate low cost supplies to meet this demand by participating in cost-effective programs offered by Northern California Power Agency (NCPA) or other suppliers and marketers of energy.	Utilities	on going		Existing (Utilities)					■		
N-63	*Implement energy efficiency programs.*	Utilities	on going		Existing (Utilities)		■	■	■		■	■
N-64	*Encourage establishment of public education programs addressing energy conservation and efficiency.*	Utilities	on going		Existing (Utilities)							■
N-65	*Incorporate cost-effective energy conservation measures into construction, maintenance, and City operation and procurement practices.*	Public Works & Admin. Services	on going		Existing				■			■
N-66	*Incorporate state and federal energy efficiency standards and policies in relevant City codes, regulations and procedures.*	Planning/ Inspection Services	on going		Existing		■		■		■	
N-67	*Provide information and advice on the use of alternative energy technologies, including the relative costs and benefits of different types of fuel, to all customers.*	Utilities	on going		Existing (Utilities)				■			■
N-68	*Monitor other utilities that successfully use alternative energy sources and seek funding for similar projects that would be appropriate in Palo Alto.*	Utilities	on going		Existing (Utilities)					■		
N-69	*Strictly enforce Uniform Building Code seismic safety restrictions.*	Planning/ Inspection Services	on going		Existing		■		■		■	
N-70	*Continue to provide incentives for seismic retrofits of structures in the University Avenue/Downtown area.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing		■		■		■	■

5 Natural Environment Implementation Plan

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing (in years)	New CIP (GF unless noted)	Operating Budget (GF unless noted)	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
N-71	*Allow development rights achieved through seismic upgrading of specified sites to be transferred to designated eligible receiver sites.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing		■		■		■	■
N-72	*Revise the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to recognize seismic, geologic, and soil related hazards.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
N-73	*Require preparation of a report from a engineering geologist that reviews geologic, soils, and engineering reports for development in hazard areas. Establish appropriate fees to cover the cost of this review.*	Public Works	0-12		Existing	Fees & Charges	■		■		■	
N-74	*Review and update, as appropriate, City code requirements for excavation, grading, and filling to ensure that they conform to currently accepted standards. Recover the cost of this work through grading permit fees.*	Planning/ Building Inspection	on going		Less than $50,000 one time	Fees & Charges	■				■	
N-75	*Establish a standardized process for evaluating the impacts of development on the storm drainage system.*	Public Works	0-7		Existing *(Utilities)*	Assessments	■		■		■	
N-76	*Implement the requirements of FEMA relating to construction in Special Flood Hazard Areas as illustrated on the Flood Insurance Rate Maps.*	Public Works	0-7		Existing		■		■	■	■	
N-77	*Regularly review and update the Palo Alto Foothills Fire Management Plan and the fire emergency evacuation provisions in the City's Emergency Management Plan.*	Fire	on going		Existing			■	■			■
N-78	*Provide public education on fire safety, including evacuation routes and guidelines for clearance of landscaping and other hazards around structures.*	Fire	on going		Existing							■

5 Natural Environment Implementation Plan

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing (in years)	New CIP (GF unless noted)	Operating Budget (GF unless noted)	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
N-79	*Minimize fire hazards by implementing low density zoning in wild land fire hazard areas.*	Planning/ Planning	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost						■	
N-80	*Evaluate measures for consolidation of services with other jurisdictions and automatic or mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions to improve efficiencies.*	Fire & Police	on going		Existing			■		■		
N-81	*Regularly update and distribute the City of Palo Alto Emergency Management Plan, including the earthquake, flood, and fire emergency evacuation plans. Consult with the Palo Alto Unified School District in updating the Plan.*	Fire	on going		Less than $50,000 on going			■		■		■
N-82	*Initiate public education programs that strongly encourage that each household in the City is prepared to be self-sufficient for 72 hours after a major earthquake. Update and distribute the City's earthquake preparedness guide, "Living with Our Faults."*	Fire	on going		Existing							■

6 Community Facilities and Services Implementation Plan (Draft 3/1/99)

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing (in years)	New CIP (GF unless noted)	Operating Budget (GF unless noted)	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Development Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
C-1	*In cooperation with existing public and private agencies and PAUSD, develop a service program that will coordinate the efforts of agencies providing services to families and youth in Palo Alto.*	Community Services	0-7		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Other				■		■
C-2	*Continue to use the City/School liaison committee to remove barriers to community use of schools and facilities and coordinate other areas of mutual interest.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing					■		
C-3	*Assess the potential for City use of PAUSD facilities for child care, libraries, recreational facilities, community meeting space, education, health care, culture, and computer resources.*	Manager's Office	0-7		Existing					■		
C-4	*Work with PAUSD to determine ways that schools can be made more available to the community for weekend and evening use.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing					■		
C-5	*Consider joint provision of library services with PAUSD.*	Community Services	0-7	Over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going					■		
C-6	*Provide regular status reports to the PAUSD on potential and approved development projects.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing					■		
C-7	*Require an assessment of school impacts prior to the approval of development projects that require legislative acts, including general plan amendments and zoning changes.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	
Policy C-7	Actively work with private, nonprofit, and public community service organization to avoid duplication and to coordinate the delivery of services like child care, senior services, and recreation.	Community Services/ Human Services	on going		Existing					■		■

6 Community Facilities and Services Implementation Plan (Draft 3/1/99)

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing (in years)	New CIP (GF unless noted)	Operating Budget (GF unless noted)	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Development Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
C-8	*Establish a program to facilitate continuing corporate support for community services through contributions of funds, time, materials, and expertise.*	Community Services	0-7		Existing					■		■
C-9	*Establish performance review criteria for City employees that consider the quality of customer service provided.*	Human Resources	on going		Existing (GF & Utilities)				■			
C-10	*Establish tangible incentives and enhance rewards and recognition programs to encourage City staff to deliver high quality services.*	Human Resources	on going		Existing				■			
C-11	*Continue to budget for City staff training in customer service oriented management techniques.*	Human Resources	on going		Existing (GF & Utilities)							
C-12	*Encourage City work groups to examine and improve operating procedures.*	Manager's Office	0-7		Existing							
C-13	*Use the Child Care Master Plan to guide the delivery of child care services. Update and amend this Plan to include standards for evaluating the impacts of new development on child care service needs.*	Community Services	0-7		Less than $50,000 one time	Fees/ Charges			■	■		
C-14	*Work with the Child Care Advisory Committee to evaluate the feasibility of requiring child care impact assessments for proposed development projects.*	Community Services/ City Attorney/ Planning/ Planning	0-7		Less than $50,000 one time	Fees/ Charges		■				
C-15	*Study changes in zoning, parking, and landscaping requirements that would facilitate the development of neighborhood child and/or senior care facilities.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				

6 Community Facilities and Services Implementation Plan (Draft 3/1/99)

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing (in years)	New CIP (GF unless noted)	Operating Budget (GF unless noted)	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
C-16	*Create development incentives (such as increased floor area ratio or reduced parking requirements) for employers or developers who include child and/or senior care facilities in the design of new housing and commercial buildings.*	Planning/ Planning, Attorney's Office, & Community Services	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
C-17	*Facilitate the application process for proposed child and/or senior care centers. Work with applicants or potential applicants to identify appropriate locations for such centers.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing						■	■
C-18	*Encourage the continuation and development of after-school and evening programs for children and youth. Maximize participation in such programs by increasing the number of locations where the programs are provided and by supporting transportation options to these locations.*	Community Services	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 on going					■		
Policy C-16	Identify existing or potential locations for child and/or senior care in public facilities and actively promote the establishment of such facilities.	Community Services	on going								■	■
C-19	*Develop improvement plans for the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of community facilities, and keep these facilities viable community assets by investing the necessary resources.*	Community Services	0-7	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	$500,000 - $1,000,000 on going			■				■
C-20	*Conduct comprehensive analyses of long-term infrastructure replacement requirements and costs.*	Admin Services, Public Works & Utilities	0-7		Existing *(GF & Utilities)*			■				
C-21	*Incorporate as an additional criterion used in prioritizing sidewalk repairs, a standard related to the level of pedestrian usage.*	Public Works	0-7		Existing				■			

6 Community Facilities and Services Implementation Plan (Draft 3/1/99)

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
C-22	*Assess the development of a performing arts center as an asset to the community and local economy.*	Community Services	0-7		$50,000 - $500,000 one time			■				
C-23	*Study and recommend methods of private and public financing for improved park maintenance, rehabilitation, and construction.*	Community Services & Admin Services	on going		Less than $50,000 one time			■				
C-24	*Preserve El Camino Park as a recreational resource for the community at a reasonable cost.*	Manager's Office	0-7		Existing					■		
C-25	*Consider potential park sites when preparing coordinated area plans.*	Planning/ Planning	on going	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership		■				
C-26	*In conjunction with new development proposals, pursue creation of park, plaza, or other public gathering places that meet neighborhood needs.*	Planning/ Planning & Community Services	on going	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership		■			■	
C-27	*Continue to implement Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements in City facilities including, but not limited to, sidewalk curb cuts, building entrances, meeting room access and sight and hearing adjuncts.*	Public Works & Community Services	on going	Over $1,000,000	Existing				■			

7 Business and Economics Implementation Plan

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing (in years)	New CIP (GF unless noted)	Operating Budget (GF unless noted)	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
B-1	*Initiate assessment districts or other programs to facilitate neighborhood shopping center improvements such as landscaping, parking, and access to public transportation.*	Administrative Services	on going	Infrastructure over $1,000,000	$50,000 - $500,000 Periodic	Assessments & Debt Financing	■				■	
B-2	*Implement the City's Economic Resources Plan.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing							
B-3	*On an on-going basis, evaluate opportunities for City involvement in public/private partnerships, including public investment in infrastructure and other improvements, siting of public art, and modification of land use regulations and other development controls.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing		■			■		
B-4	*Develop the City Council approved fiber optic ring around the City as recommended in the 1996 Telecommunications Strategy Study and evaluate and implement enhancements to the system.*	Utilities	0-7	Infrastructure over $1,000,000 *(Utilities)*	$500,000 - $1,000,000 *(Utilities)* on going	Fees & Charges						■
B-5	*Simplify the design review process for small-scale changes to previously approved site plans and buildings.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		Existing		■					
B-6	*Regularly evaluate ways to improve coordination of the City's environmental review, permitting, and inspection processes, including issues relating to hazardous materials and water quality regulation.*	Planning/ Inspection Services	on going		Existing			■		■		■
B-7	*Improve design guidelines to reduce ambiguity and more clearly articulate design principles to the business community.*	Planning/ Planning	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost				■			■
B-8	*Evaluate methods to lessen the development limitations currently imposed by adopted floor area ratios in a more flexible manner. Such methods could include the use of building envelope restrictions.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				

7 Business and Economics Implementation Plan

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing (in years)	New CIP (GF unless noted)	Operating Budget (GF unless noted)	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
B-9	***Revise the Sign Ordinance to more clearly reflect community design standards and requirements relating to size, number of signs, allowed locations and design.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		$50,000 - $500,000 one time		■					
B-10	***Revise zoning and other regulations as needed to encourage the revitalization of aging retail areas.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
B-11	***Identify and prioritize Centers in need of economic or physical revitalization.***	Manager's Office	0-7		Existing			■				
Policy B-18	Create incentives for providing multi-unit housing on top of parking lots in or near commercial centers and transit hubs.	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
Policy B-19	***Use street corridor improvements as catalysts for economic revitalization in selected Centers.***	Manager's Office	on going			Public/ Private Partnership						
B-12	***Identify key sites on El Camino Real that would be suitable for Neighborhood Centers. Evaluate economic, design, and regulatory opportunities and constraints for each site, and identify potential incentives that could be offered by the City to improve the area's appearance and economic vitality*** *(Also see L-32)*	Planning/ Planning	8-12		Included in L-32 Cost	Included in L-32 Cost	■	■	■	■		
B-13	***Review the effect of size caps, parking requirements, and other land use restrictions on the viability and competitiveness of neighborhood centers.***	Planning/ Planning	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost			■				
B-14	***Modify zoning regulations to allow convenience-oriented businesses such as restaurants and office support services within the Research Park.***	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update		■		

7 Business and Economics Implementation Plan

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B-15	*Review policies and regulations guiding development at Stanford Research Park and revise them as needed to allow improved responsiveness to changing market conditions.*	Planning/ Planning	3-7		Existing		■		■	■		
B-16	*Study the feasibility of a "transfer of development rights" (TDR) program and other measures that would provide greater development flexibility within Stanford Research Park without creating significant adverse traffic impacts or increasing allowable floor area.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	8-12		Less than $50,000 one time			■		■		
B-17	*Identify opportunities along El Camino Real where a concentration of commercial services serving Research Park employees and visitors might be created. (Also see L-32)*	Planning/ Planning	8-12		Included in L-32 Cost	Included in L-32 Cost	■	■				
B-18	*Evaluate the location near the northwest corner of Page Mill Road and El Camino Real for a hotel and conference facility.*	Manager's Office	0-7		$50,000 - $500,000 one time	Public/ Private partnership		■			■	

8 Governance Implementation Plan

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		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Develop-ment Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
G-1	***Initiate a charter amendment for the ballot that would delegate specific final decision making authority to the Planning Commission.***	Attorney's Office/ Clerk's Office	0-7		$50,000 - $500,000 one time		■					
G-2	***Periodically assess the need for citizen input on various policy issues and appoint advisory bodies and ad hoc committees as needed.***	Manager's Office	on going		Existing			■				■
G-3	***Use design workshops or charettes to address design issues within the City.***	Planning/ Planning	on going		Less than $50,000 periodic			■				■
G-4	***Establish a City/neighborhood liaison system using electronic and print media to inform residents of current issues and to facilitate resident feedback to City Council and staff.***	Manager's Office	0-7		$50,000 - $500,000 on going			■				■
G-5	***Create electronic bulletin boards to increase opportunities for interaction between citizens and government, including the posting of meeting agendas and other items of broad interest.***	Admin Services, Manager's Office & Clerk's Office	on going		Less than $50,000 on going							■
G-6	***Provide advanced communication opportunities for the public at City libraries.***	Community Services	on going	Infrastructure $50,000 - $500,000	$50,000- $500,000 on going	Grants						■
G-7	***Prepare a handbook of information about neighborhood and civic organizations addressing subjects like earthquake preparedness, neighborhood beautification, event planning, how to communicate with City Hall, and guidelines establishing and managing neighborhood and civic organizations.***	Manager's Office	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 one time							■

8 Governance Implementation Plan

No.	Program (unless marked as Policy)	General		Financing			Action					
		Lead Dept. or Agency	Timing *(in years)*	New CIP *(GF unless noted)*	Operating Budget *(GF unless noted)*	Other Financing	Ordinance or other Legislation	Study or Plan	Guidelines, Standards or Monitoring	Inter-Agency Coord	Development Review	Ongoing Public Education & Outreach
G-8	*Establish consistent definitions of neighborhood boundaries to facilitate notification and communication.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing							■
G-9	*Where feasible, assist residents with neighborhood improvement, beautification, and planting projects.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing							■
G-10	*Work with neighborhood and civic organizations on emergency preparedness and security programs.*	Fire & Police	on going		Existing							■
G-11	*Continue and expand programs to enhance opportunities for volunteer assistance.*	Manager's Office	on going		$50,000 - $500,000 on going	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership						■
G-12	*Continue and expand the opportunities for public and nonprofit organizations serving the City to provide information about themselves to the public.*	Community Services	on going		Existing					■		■
G-13	*Continue the program to publicly recognize the efforts of individuals, groups, and businesses who provide volunteer services within the City.*	Manager's Office	on going		Existing	Grants & Public/ Private Partnership						■
G-14	*Establish a procedure that allows the City Council to initiate coordinated area plans for certain large areas that it has targeted for change.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Existing	Included in Zoning Ord. Update	■	■				
G-15	*Explore opportunities to establish a process for developing precise development or economic revitalization plans for smaller areas, frequently with multiple ownership, where redevelopment, re-use, or redesign is needed.*	Planning/ Planning & Attorney's Office	3-7		Existing	Public/ Private Partnership		■				

8 Governance Implementation Plan

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G-16	*Encourage use of the Preliminary Development Review (pre-screening) Ordinance for specific development proposals to that may r equire changes to current City policies. As appropriate, test and refine application of this Ordinance.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Existing		■				■	
G-17	*Use illustrations and a "form code" to simplify the Zoning Ordinance, to make it more understandable to readers, and to promote well-designed neighborhoods.*	Planning/ Planning	0-2		Included in Zoning Ord. Update Cost		Zoning Ord. Update	Zoning Ord. Update				
G-18	*Create brief, understandable written materials that guide citizens and businesses through the City review and approval processes.*	Planning/ Planning	on going		Less than $50,000 on going							■
G-19	*Continue and expand a customer-oriented process improvement effort. (Also see C-10)*	Human Resources	on going		Included in C-10 Cost	Public/ Private Partnership			■			
G-20	*Develop, use, and update when necessary, design guidelines for various geographic areas of the City or types of projects to supplement the Architectural Review Board Ordinance.*	Planning/ Planning	3-7		$50,000 - $500,000 periodic		■	■	■			■
G-21	*Continually educate and remind policy and decision-makers, staff, and the public about the distinction between quasi-judicial and legislative decision-making.*	Attorney's Office	on going		Existing							■

Glossary

A

Above Moderate-Income

Households with income greater than 120 percent of areawide median family income. Income thresholds vary depending on the number of persons in the household.

Active Recreation

Recreational activities that require the use of organized play areas, such as playing fields, swimming pools, and basketball courts. Contrasted to "passive recreation" which does not require the use of such areas.

ADA

See "Americans with Disabilities Act"

Adaptive Reuse

A process through which an older building or site, particularly one with historic value, is rehabilitated or adapted to meet current codes and respond to current market demand for commercial or residential space.

Affordable Housing

Housing that can be rented or purchased by a household with very low-, low-, or moderate-income for less than 30 percent of that household's gross monthly income.

Alleyway

A narrow service way that provides a permanently reserved but secondary means of public access not intended for general traffic circulation; typically located along rear property lines.

Alluvial Deposit

Fine soils from eroding land forms deposited by streams and other flowing waters.

Alternative Energy Technology

Technology that facilitates the use of renewable (non-fossil fuel) energy resources.

Alternative Energy Source

Any of a number of energy sources that do not rely on fossil fuels, including sunlight, wind, cogeneration, and biomass.

Amendment

A formal City Council change or revision to the Comprehensive Plan, including either the Plan's text or its maps.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Federal legislation specifying provisions to be made in the design (or redesign) of buildings, parking, and outdoor areas to remove barriers for persons with disabilities and guaranteeing equal opportunity in public accommodations, transportation and government services.

Appeal

The process by which an individual, group or entity obtains formal review of a decision.

Appropriate

An act, condition, or state that is considered suitable.

Aquifer

An underground water-bearing layer of permeable rock, sand, or gravel through which water can seep or be held in natural storage.

Architectural Review Board (ARB)

City Council appointed five-member board, responsible for reviewing the design of all exterior building and site changes requiring a building permit, except singly developed single family dwellings and duplexes.

Arterial

Major roadway mainly serving through-traffic; takes traffic to and from expressways and freeways; provides access to adjacent properties.

Assessment District

A procedure to pay for capital improvements wherein bonds are sold and obligation for payment is shared by property owners within the district.

Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG)

A consortium of cities and counties in nine Bay Area Counties formed to cooperate on common planning issues and solve common development problems.

At Risk Units

Housing units that may lose their federal subsidies due to expiring contracts under curtailed federal housing programs. Such units are "at risk" of being converted to market rate housing.

Auto-oriented

A form of development that depends on exposure to auto traffic and presumes people will use cars to travel to and from the site.

Average Household Size

The number of persons in the City living in households divided by the total number of households in the City. Excludes persons living in group quarters.

B

Baseline Rate

A utility rate structure that provides all customers with enough energy (or water, etc.) to meet basic needs at an affordable cost; higher rates are charged for amounts used beyond the base consumption level.

Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)

Regional agency responsible for air quality planning in the Bay Area, monitoring air pollution levels, and setting and enforcing limits for stationary air pollution sources.

Bay Trail

400-mile trail system, with spur trails to parks and nearby urban areas, being constructed in segments that will eventually encircle San Francisco Bay close to the waterfront; about 45 percent complete in 1997.

Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART)

Rail rapid transit system serving Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and San Mateo Counties.

Baylands

General term for the low-lying areas east of Highway 101, including developed land, open space, wetlands, marsh and flood basins.

Baylands Master Plan (1987)

1987 City Council adopted Palo Alto planning policy document for areas east of Highway 101.

Below Market Rate (BMR) Housing Unit

Any housing unit specifically priced to be sold or rented to very low-, low-, or moderate-income households for an amount less than the fair market value of the unit.

Below Market Rate (BMR) Program

The City of Palo Alto's Inclusionary Housing policy and procedures that seek to increase the amount of housing affordable to individuals and families with less than median income.

Best Management Practice (BMP)

Programs, technologies, operating methods, or other measures that control, prevent, or reduce pollution.

Bicycle Lane

A separate lane on a roadway that is reserved for bicyclists and demarcated by lane striping.

Bicycle Boulevard

A low volume through-street where bicycles have priority over cars, conflicts between cars and bicycles are minimized, and bicycle travel time is reduced by removal of stop signs and other impediments to bicycle travel.

Bikeway

A corridor designated and/or reserved for bicyclists. A Class I facility is a bike path that is not part of a vehicle roadway. A Class II facility consists of on-street bike lanes. A Class III facility is a roadway that has been designated as a bike route by signage only.

Biotechnology

The industry associated with the application of biological and engineering data to technology.

Bollard

A relatively short post used on or along a street or path for decorative, lighting, or traffic control purposes.

Boulevard

A roadway characterized by a landscaped median and planting strips on each side.

Buffer

An area of land separating two distinct land uses that acts to soften or mitigate the effects of one land use on the other.

Building Envelope Restriction

A method of limiting the size of a building by specifying the maximum building size in three dimensions.

Buildout

The point at which all land eligible for development under the Comprehensive Plan has been developed to its maximum allowed level.

Bulbout

A usually rounded extension of the sidewalk or parkway into the adjacent street that facilitates pedestrian activity or added landscaping.

Business Outreach

City programs that convey information to local businesses, receive input from local businesses regarding their needs, and assist businesses in meeting these needs.

Business Retention

City programs aimed at supporting, retaining, and sustaining local businesses.

Bypass Culvert

An overflow device used along creeks to divert excess stormwater as a means of reducing flooding and avoiding the need for creek channelization.

C

Cal-Ventura

Mixed use neighborhood located southeast of the California Avenue business district generally bordered by Cambridge Avenue, Fernando Avenue, the Caltrain railroad tracks, and El Camino Real.

California Air Resources Board (CARB)

State board responsible for approving air quality attainment plans, establishing air quality standards and vehicle emissions requirements, and implementing the Federal Clean Air Act State Implementation Plan.

California Department of Toxic Substances Control

State agency responsible for the regulation of contaminated sites.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

State law requiring State and local agencies to regulate activities with consideration for environmental protection, and requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) if the potential for a significant adverse environmental impact exists.

California Integrated Waste Management Act (1989)

State legislation enacted in response to the need for diverting materials from landfills generally by reductions in consumption or by recycling, in order to preserve decreasing landfill capacity and natural resources; required cities and counties to divert 25 percent of solid waste from disposal by 1995 and 50 percent by January 1, 2000.

California Register of Historic Resources

Register created in 1992 as an authoritative guide for identifying the State's historic resources and indicating properties that are to be protected; includes properties on the National Register and State Historic Landmarks No.s 770 and higher.

Caltrain

Passenger rail service serving the corridor between San Francisco and Gilroy, via cities along the west side of San Francisco Bay (including Palo Alto).

Caltrans

California Department of Transportation; State agency responsible for the construction, maintenance, planning, and management of major transportation facilities in California.

Canopy: Trees for Palo Alto

A non-profit organization established in 1996, partially funded by the City of Palo for the purpose of providing community leadership, channeling volunteer efforts, and the planting of street trees. Successor to the "Tree Task Force."

Carpooling Incentive Program

Program designed to encourage employees to travel to work via car pool rather than via single passenger automobile; may include such incentives as preferential parking, high-occupancy vehicle lanes or financial remuneration.

Center

Commercial and mixed use areas of the City that serve as the focus for community life; may serve the region, the City, general neighborhoods, or a single neighborhood.

Center-based Child Care

Child care services that are provided from a designated facility, rather than in a private residence.

Central Business District (CBD)

Major commercial downtown center of a community. In Palo Alto, the University Avenue/Downtown area. General guidelines for delineating a CBD are defined by the US Census of Retail Trade; specific boundaries are set by municipalities.

Channelization

The straightening and/or enlarging of a watercourse for the purposes of storm runoff control or ease of navigation; may include lining of streambanks with a retaining material such as concrete.

Charette

An intensive effort, usually over one or two days, by a variety of interested stakeholders to develop a design solution to a given problem.

Charter

Document approved by the voters of Palo Alto that functions as a "constitution" for the City.

City/School Liaison Committee

A committee consisting of two school board members and two City Council members that meets periodically to identify and address issues of mutual interest and concern.

Citizen

A person who lives, works, shops, or visits in Palo Alto.

City Council

Nine-member elected body of Palo Alto residents responsible for governing the City and making decisions regarding the provision of City services and resolution of civic issues.

Civic Use

Any building or property that serves a public function, including schools, libraries, City Hall, post offices, police and fire stations, and recreational and cultural facilities.

Co-housing

Housing designed to include private, individual sleeping and living areas with shared or communal cooking, dining, work, and/or recreational facilities.

Collector Street

Roadway that collects and distributes local traffic to and from arterial streets, and provides access to adjacent properties.

Commercial Strip

A land use pattern characterized by continuous automobile-dependent commercial frontage, usually dominated by front parking lots and long, low buildings oriented towards a highway or arterial street.

Community Facility

Facility in which public services for Palo Alto residents are provided, including recreational and cultural services, and services for youth and seniors.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Grant program administered by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the State Department of Housing and Community Development. Grants must primarily be used to benefit very low- and low-income households with emphasis on housing and public improvement projects. The City of Palo Alto is an entitlement city that receives an annual funding grant from HUD.

Compact Development

A development philosophy that emphasizes infilling of vacant and underutilized lots before expanding the boundaries of the urban area, and encourages higher residential densities and non-residential development intensity as a means of conserving open space and supporting public transit.

Compatible

Capable of existing together without significant conflict or ill effects.

Composting

The process of mixing decaying organic material, such as yard waste and food waste, to create fertilizer and reduce the amount of waste that must be disposed in landfills.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)

Legislation passed by Congress in 1980 to address the problem of cleaning up hazardous waste sites; created a national priority list of sites to be cleaned up.

Comprehensive Plan

A compendium of city (or county) policies regarding long-term development, in the form of maps and accompanying text. The Plan is a legal document required of each local agency by the State of California Government Code Section 65301 and adopted by the City Council. Referred to in State Law and most California cities as the General Plan.

Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC)

37-member ad hoc committee appointed in 1992 by the Palo Alto City Council to prepare the draft Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and programs.

Computerized Traffic Management System

A system in which traffic signals are timed with the aid of a computer to provide coordination, thus minimizing delays and ensuring that traffic flows as smoothly as possible.

Conditional Use Permit (CUP)

A discretionary permit that allows the use of land or occupancy of a structure for a particular purpose subject to limitations or conditions of approval.

Condominium Conversion Ordinance

Palo Alto ordinance enacted in 1974 that restricts the conversion of apartments to condominiums as a way of preserving the City's rental housing stock.

Congestion Management Program (CMP)

A State-mandated program required of urban counties; employs growth management techniques, level of service requirements, standards for public transit, trip reduction programs, jobs/housing balance strategies, and capital improvement programming to control and/or reduce the cumulative regional traffic impacts of development.

Consolidated Plan Action Plan

Locally prepared document required for the receipt of federal housing funds; outlines actions to be taken to provide housing opportunities for low and moderate income households.

Convenience-oriented Business

A business that sells retail items generally necessary or desirable for everyday living, usually purchased at a convenient nearby location. Often purchased without comparison shopping because these goods cost relatively little compared to income.

Coordinated Area Plan

A plan that provides more specific guidance than the Comprehensive Plan for development of a sub-area identified as having the potential for change; a means to achieve citizen participation in the planning of such an area. *See also Precise Plan and Specific Plan.*

Coordinated Resource Management and Planning (CRMP)

Coalition of local government staff, resource agency staff, and representatives from various community, business, and interest groups, administered by the Peninsula Conservation Center; formed to address a range of natural resource issues in creek watersheds, with 1996-8 emphasis on San Francisquito Creek.

Corporate Citizenship

Refers to the active participation of local business in community affairs.

Corridor

Any major transportation route, including freeways, expressways, arterials, or transit lines; may also be used to describe land uses along these routes.

Cottage

A small, simple, usually single-story detached dwelling unit.

Cottage Cluster

A grouping of cottages on a single property, often arranged around a common lawn or green area and sharing parking.

Council/Manager Government

A type of municipal government in which the chief executive official is a manager selected by the City Council. Palo Alto has a Council/Manager Government.

Creek

Any of a number of natural watercourses flowing from the hill areas to San Francisco Bay; usually characterized by a distinct channel and a band of dense vegetation along the banks.

Creek Setback

A minimum distance requirement between the top of a creekbank and the nearest structure or other improvement; used to reduce erosion, minimize flooding, and conserve wildlife habitat.

Curb Lane

Portion of a street next to the curb that can be used for on-street parking or auto or bicycle travel.

Customer Service

In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, refers to courteous treatment of the public, and efficient, responsive delivery of services by City employees.

Customer-oriented Process Improvement

An approach to restructuring City service delivery that places first priority on making things easier for the public.

D

Day/Night Noise Level (L_{dn})

The average A-weighted noise level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 10 decibels to levels in the night between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am.

Decibel (dB)

A unit describing the amplitude of sound, equal to 20 times the logarithm to the base 10 of the ratio of the pressure of the sound measured to the reference pressure, which is 20 micropascals (20 micronewtons per square meter).

Demand-responsive Paratransit

Form of transit serving persons with disabilities in which vehicles are dispatched on an as-needed basis instead of following a fixed route and schedule; includes taxis and dial-a-ride services.

Density

For residential uses, the number of permanent residential dwelling units per acre of land. For non-residential uses, density is often referred to as development intensity and is expressed through a ratio of floor area to lot size. *See also gross density, net density.*

Density Bonus

The allocation of development rights that allow a development to include additional residential units or square footage beyond the maximum otherwise allowed by zoning, usually in exchange for the provision or preservation of an amenity at the same site or another location.

Design Guidelines

Provisions guiding the design of buildings that are not mandatory but may be used by Staff, the City's advisory boards and commissions, and the City Council in evaluating projects.

Design Review

A process used to administer regulations for the design of structures to ensure that such structures are suitable, harmonious, and in keeping with the general appearance, historic character, and/or style of the structure and/or surrounding area.

Detention

The temporary storage of stormwater overflow; typically in a pond or underground pipes.

Development

The physical extension and/or construction of urban land uses. Development activities include subdivision of land; construction or alteration of structures, roads, utilities, and other facilities; installation of septic systems; grading; deposit of refuse, debris, or fill; and clearing of natural vegetative cover for non-agricultural purposes.

District Park

Parks that serve large areas of the City and contain a broad variety of facilities.

Downtown

The business center of a City or town; in Palo Alto, used to describe the University Avenue business district.

Downtown Urban Design Guide

1994 City Council approved document intended to provide a framework for the design of buildings and public spaces in Downtown Palo Alto; provisions are advisory, not mandatory.

Drought-tolerant Landscaping

Landscaping that minimizes water requirements and consumption through plant selection, design, installation, and management. *Also known as xeriscape.*

Dwelling Unit

A room or group of rooms, including living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation facilities, constituting a separate and independent housekeeping unit, occupied or intended for occupancy by one household on a non-transient basis and having not more than one kitchen.

E

Easement

The right to use property owned by another for specific purposes, such as access to another piece of property, conveyance of stormwater, or transmission of gas or electricity.

Economic Resources Plan

1993 City Council adopted five point strategy for working with the local business community.

Eichler

A style of housing popularized in Palo Alto during the 1950s by homebuilder Joseph Eichler and characterized by single story, slab on grade construction, spartan facades, interior courtyards, flat or slightly sloping roofs and expansive glass walls.

Electronic Information

Information that is stored, transmitted, or received via an electronic medium, such as a computer and modem.

Element

A component chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. State law requires each Plan to incorporate seven elements (Land Use, Circulation, Housing, Open Space, Conservation, Safety and Noise), although the elements may be organized in any of a number of ways.

Emergency Shelter

A facility that provides immediate and short-term housing and supplemental services for homeless persons.

Emergency Preparedness

The act of planning and preparing for a natural or man-made disaster, such as an earthquake or fire.

Emergency Management Plan

City of Palo Alto document that includes provisions for pre-disaster planning, evacuation, communication, shelter, welfare, public health and safety, and post-disaster recovery.

Employment District

Relatively large areas of the City dominated by low-rise office, high technology, light industrial, and other job-generating land uses but containing relatively few retail and service uses.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR)

An informational document that provides decision makers and the public with information about the effects a proposed project is likely to have on the environment, ways these effects may be minimized and alternatives to the proposed project. The document is prepared consistent with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Federal agency charged with protecting the environment.

Environmentally Sensitive Area

Areas that have limited suitability for development due to their natural resource values, such as wetlands, steep hillsides and distinctive wildlife habitat areas.

Environmental Review

Process through which the City of Palo Alto, following the procedures of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), evaluates a project for its potential impacts on the environment.

Expressway

Major roadway with limited access to adjacent properties; devoted almost exclusively to traffic movement, mainly serving through-traffic.

F

Fair Share

The equitable assignment of a regional need, such as affordable housing, to the individual local governments within that region. Typically used by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) to assign affordable housing responsibilities to Bay Area cities and counties, but also used with regard to hazardous materials and special needs housing.

Fault Rupture

Fracturing or displacement of the ground surface due to seismic activity along an earthquake fault or fault trace. *Also called "surface rupture."*

Feasible

Capable of being done, executed, or managed successfully considering physical, financial, scheduling and other constraints.

Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

Federal agency responsible for air safety and regulation of air traffic.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Federal agency responsible for disaster response and assistance in post-disaster recovery.

Fiber Optic Ring

A network of Fiber Optic cables installed by the City of Palo Alto to serve a portion of the electronic data needs of the business and residential community.

Flexible Zoning

Land use regulations that provide more leeway to property owners by using performance standards rather than rigid lists of permitted and prohibited uses and dimensional requirements.

Flood Control

Any of a number of structural or non-structural measures designed to divert or contain floodwater and prevent flooding.

Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)

The official map on which the Federal Insurance Administration has delineated areas of special flood hazard and the risk premium zones applicable to the community.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

The gross floor area permitted on a site divided by the total net area of the site, expressed in decimals of one to two places.

Foothills

The hilly and sloping areas lying at the base of a mountain range. In Palo Alto, the area between the alluvial flatland and Skyline Boulevard are called the Foothills, including Stanford lands southwest of Junipero Serra Avenue.

Form Code

A set of regulations that address the location and physical attributes of building(s) or site(s) by precisely establishing the location and form of structures including setbacks, building heights and other physical features, rather than control development by applying maximum development limits.

Freeway

Major roadway with controlled access; devoted exclusively to traffic movement, mainly of a through or regional nature. Local examples include Highways 101 and 280.

Frontage

The part of a lot that touches a road, street, or watercourse; it is often described as a specific amount such as "60 feet of frontage".

G

Gateway

A point along a roadway at which a motorist or pedestrian gains a sense of having entered the City or a particular part of the City. This impression can be imparted through such things as signs, monuments, landscaping, a change in development character, or a natural feature such as a creek.

General Fund

Component of City budget generated by sales tax, property tax, utility tax, and other miscellaneous sources, and used to fund general City Services and debt service.

General Plan

See Comprehensive Plan.

Geologic Hazard

Any public safety hazard associated with geologic forces, including landsliding, mudsliding, surface rupture, groundshaking, liquefaction, and erosion and sedimentation.

Goal

A general end towards which the City will direct effort.

Grading Ordinance

Locally adopted ordinance that regulates grading activities and ensures that erosion, aesthetic, and drainage considerations are taken into account.

Gross Density

The number of housing units per acre of land, including roads, utility easements, and other dedicated rights-of-way.

Groundshaking

Earthquake-induced shaking of the ground; may cause widespread damage and structural failure. Varies depending on the firmness of the ground and the magnitude of the earthquake.

Groundwater

Water under the earth's surface, often confined to aquifers, capable of supplying wells and springs.

Groundwater Recharge

The process of infiltration and percolation of rainwater from land areas or streams through permeable soils into water holding aquifers that provide underground storage.

Guard and Go

Method of discouraging through-traffic on local streets through frequent use of stop signs.

H

Habitat

The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.

Hazardous Material

An injurious substance, including pesticides, herbicides, poisons, toxic metals and chemicals, liquefied natural gas, explosives, volatile chemicals, and nuclear fuels.

Hazardous Waste (HW) Facility Combining District

A special zoning district that allows hazardous waste facilities subject to specified standards; used in combination with a "base" zoning district that allows a broader range of uses such as industrial or manufacturing.

Heritage Tree

A designated tree that is unique and important to the community because of its species, age, size, location, and/or historical significance.

High Density

A relative term, used to describe development dominated by multi-family housing and buildings of two stories or more. In Palo Alto, high density areas generally exceed 30 housing units per acre.

High Technology

An economic sector composed of a broad range of activities, including development and production of computers and office machines, communications equipment, semiconductors and electronic components, aerospace and military vehicles, computer services, research and development laboratories, and scientific instruments.

High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane

A traffic lane reserved for vehicles that contain two or more (and in some cases three or more) persons.

Historic Buildings Inventory

City-maintained roster of buildings and/or sites with national, state, or local historic significance.

Historic Preservation

The preservation of historically significant structures and neighborhoods, often with the intent of restoring or rehabilitating the structures to their former condition.

Historic Preservation Ordinance

City of Palo Alto legislation guiding the maintenance and preservation of historic buildings and sites.

Historic Resource

A historic building or site that is noteworthy for its significance in local, state or national history or culture, its architecture or design, or its works of art, memorabilia, or artifacts.

Historic Resources Board (HRB)

City Council appointed seven-member board, responsible for designating, preserving, protecting, enhancing and perpetuating those historic structures, districts and neighborhoods that contribute to the cultural and aesthetic heritage of Palo Alto.

Historic Structure

A structure deemed to be historically significant based on its visual quality, design, history, association, context, and/or integrity.

Home Improvement Exception

A process in the City's Zoning Ordinance that allows minor exceptions to the site development regulations in order to preserve an existing architectural style or neighborhood character.

HOME Program

Federal program enacted in 1990 that distributes funds on a formula basis to qualifying local jurisdictions and to the State Department of Housing and Community Development for distribution to other local jurisdictions; funds may be used for rehabilitation, new construction, acquisition, and tenant-based rental assistance; the City of Palo Alto is a non-entitlement City for HOME funds and must make application to the State.

Horizon Year

The end of the period covered by the Comprehensive Plan; in this case, 2010.

Household Hazardous Waste

Waste that is generated in the home that are toxic or hazardous to humans and the environment when discarded, including paint, motor oil, batteries, and household cleaning products.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

A cabinet level department of the federal government that administers housing and community development programs.

Housing Development Fund

City maintained fund that can be used for acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of housing. The funds are primarily available to non-profit groups who agree to maintain the long-term affordability of the housing units.

Housing Discrimination Ordinance

Chapter 9.74 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code that prohibits discrimination in renting or leasing housing based on age, parenthood, pregnancy, or the potential or actual presence of a minor child.

Housing Technical Document

A supplement to the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan that includes technical, socioeconomic and housing data as well as more detail on the City's housing programs; meets State requirements for Housing Elements.

Housing Unit

The place of permanent or customary abode for a person or household. May be a single family dwelling, a condominium, a co-operative, a mobile home, an apartment, or any other residential unit considered real property under State law. Must have cooking facilities, a bathroom, and a place to sleep.

Human Relations Commission (HRC)

City Council appointed board consisting of seven Palo Alto residents; responsible for addressing a broad range of human relations and equity issues in the City.

I

Impervious Surface

Surface through which water cannot easily penetrate, such as roof, road, sidewalk, and paved parking lot.

Impact

The effect of any direct, man-made actions or indirect repercussions of man-made actions on existing physical, environmental, social, or economic conditions.

Implementation

An action, procedure, program or technique that involves the carrying out of policies.

In-lieu Fee

Cash payments that may be required of an owner or developer as a substitute for dedication of land or physical improvements; usually calculated in dollars per lot or square foot of land or building area.

Incentive

A reward or bonus offered by the City to encourage the private sector to take an action that would be less likely otherwise.

Inclusionary Housing

Housing that is built as a result of local regulations that require a minimum percentage of all units in developments exceeding a certain size to be affordable to low and moderate income households.

Infill

Development of individual vacant lots or leftover vacant properties within areas that are already developed.

Infiltration

The process through which water travels from the ground surface through soil to the aquifer.

Infrastructure

Public services and facilities, such as sewage disposal systems, water supply systems, other utility systems, and roads.

Initial Study

A preliminary evaluation of a project under the California Environmental Quality Act to determine the necessity for and scope of an Environmental Impact Report, or to enable modifications that would qualify for a Negative Declaration, or to provide a factual basis for a Negative Declaration.

Injection Well

A well used to dispose of liquids or replenish groundwater through injection into the ground.

Intercity/Intercounty

Involving more than one City or County.

J

Jitney

A small bus or van that transports passengers on a fixed route according to a flexible schedule for free or a small fare. *See also Shuttle Bus.*

L

LAFCo (Local Agency Formation Commission)

A five-member commission within Santa Clara County comprised of two county supervisors, two City Council members, and one member of the public, that reviews, evaluates and is empowered to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve all proposals for formation of special districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts and merger of districts within the county.

Land Banking

Acquisition of land by a local government or other nonprofit entity for eventual resale or improvement at a later date, usually for affordable housing, open space or parkland.

Landsliding

The rapid downslope movement of rock, soil, and debris; usually induced by heavy rain or seismic activity.

Land Use and Circulation Map

The poster-sized fold-out diagram in the Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan illustrating the general distribution and intensity of allowable development, and the location of existing and planned roads, public facilities and open space.

Land Use Definitions

Definitions of Land Use correspond to the categories on the land use and Circulation Map. Complete definition of each category is contained in the Land Use and Circulation Element.

L_{dn}

See Day/Night Level.

Legislative Decision Making

Decisions that involve making or recommending new policies or laws.

Liquefaction

The transformation of loose, water-saturated granular materials (such as sand or silt) from a solid into a liquid state; may occur during major earthquakes.

Live/Work

A development type designed so that persons may live and work in the same space, often in former commercial or industrial buildings renovated for habitation.

Local Street

Minor roadway that provides access to adjacent properties only.

Local Action List

List developed by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to reduce automobile trips and traffic congestion.

Local-serving

Economic activities with a primarily local market, such as retail stores and personal services; contrasted to "basic" economic activities such as manufacturing and wholesale trade.

Long-term Parking Facility

A lot or structure dedicated to all day automobile parking.

Low-Income

Households with incomes between 51 and 80 percent of the areawide median family income. Thresholds vary depending on the number of persons in the household.

M

Marguerite Shuttle

Bus or van service available to the general public provided by Stanford University at no fee to riders, serving the campus and portions of Palo Alto and Menlo Park.

Market Pricing

An approach to transportation management for the purpose of discouraging vehicle trips that varies the cost of travel to the user through road and bridge tolls, parking fees, and other methods depending on the level of demand.

Market-rate Housing

Housing that is offered for rent or sale at fair market value without any consideration of standards for determining affordability.

Median

1.) The paved or landscaped area on a major roadway that separates traffic moving in opposing directions. 2.) The point at which one-half of a set is greater and one-half is less, such as median income or median rent.

Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC)

The regional transportation agency for the Bay Area; responsible for long-range transportation and mass transit planning, road funding, traffic and transportation models, and traffic projections.

Mid-Peninsula

Pertaining to the central part of the San Francisco Peninsula, extending from San Francisco Airport south to and including Palo Alto.

Mineral Deposits of Regional Significance

A designation applied by the State Division of Mines and Geology to land on which known deposits of commercially viable mineral or aggregate deposits exist; intended to protect quarrying operations from encroachment by incompatible uses.

Mini-park

Small neighborhood park of approximately one-half to two acres.

Minimize

To reduce or lessen, but not necessarily to eliminate.

Minimum Density Requirements

Land use regulations that allow development only if the proposed density will be greater than a specific number of units per acre.

Mission-driven Budget (MDB)

Palo Alto's unique budgetary process that integrates principals of Management by Objectives, program budgeting and performance reporting; emphasizes ensuring that resources are allocated based on agreed upon missions; focuses on planning and evaluation, accountability, resource allocation, and financial management.

Mitigate

To ameliorate, alleviate, or avoid to the extent reasonably feasible.

Mitigated Negative Declaration

A Negative Declaration that concludes a project will not have a significant effect on the environment because the project has been modified and/or mitigation measures have been included.

Mixed Use

A development type in which various uses, such as office, retail, and residential, are combined in the same

building or within separate buildings on the same site or on nearby sites.

Mobility

The ability to move from one place to another, or to transport goods from one place to another.

Moderate-Income

Households with incomes between 81 and 120 percent of the areawide median family income. Thresholds vary depending on the number of persons in the household.

Mortgage Credit Certificates

Federally created, locally run program that assists first-time home buyers in qualifying for mortgages. Certificates are issued by a local agency to qualified low- or moderate-income first time home buyers; the IRS allows eligible home buyers to take 20 percent of their annual mortgage interest as a dollar for dollar tax credit against their personal income tax.

Mortgage Revenue Bonds

Government bonds that provide low cost tax-exempt financing to developers who make a portion of the units in their projects available to low and moderate income households.

Multi-modal Transit Station

A location that provides connections between bus and rail transit modes and includes pick-up, drop-off and parking areas for cars, as well as bicycle related facilities.

Multi-Neighborhood Center

Retail shopping centers or districts that serve more than one neighborhood with a diverse mix of uses, including retail, service, office, and residential.

Mutual Aid Agreement

An agreement between two or more jurisdictions for the joint provision of services that cross jurisdictional boundaries, such as fire protection.

N

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)

The Nation's largest independent, non-profit public service organization advocating quality recreation and parks for the American people; its objectives revolve around public advocacy, public visibility, research, and professional development.

National Register of Historic Places

The federal government's list of properties that have been identified as worthy of preservation; properties may be listed on the Register or may be identified as being "eligible" or "potentially eligible;" properties are usually listed in the National Register through nominations by the State Office of Historic Preservation.

Native Plants

Plants indigenous to an area or from a similar climate and requiring little or no supplemental irrigation once established.

Negative Declaration

A finding under the procedures of the California Environmental Quality Act that a proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment and does not require preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.

Neighborhood

A part of the City defined by distinct characteristics and boundaries and considered as familiar territory by its residents.

Neighborhood Beautification

Refers to any of a number of efforts or programs aimed at improving the visual quality of a neighborhood, including improved landscaping, signage, streets, painting and building facades, as well as community clean-ups.

Neighborhood Center

A small retail center with a primary trade area limited to the immediately surrounding area; often anchored by a grocery or drug store and may include a variety of smaller retail shops and offices oriented to the everyday needs of surrounding residents. Also called *"Neighborhood Shopping Center."*

Neighborhood Park

Park of roughly two to 10 acres in size, intended to meet the recreation needs of people living or working within a one-half mile radius.

Net Density

The number of housing units per acre of land, excluding public roads, natural watercourse and drainage easements, and other dedicated rights of way.

1989 Citywide Land Use and Transportation Study

1989 City Council approved Palo Alto planning document that established non-residential development limits (in square feet) for different geographic areas in the City.

No Net Loss of Housing Potential

Development philosophy that allows non-residential development on a residentially zoned site only when an equal or greater amount of housing potential is created elsewhere in the City.

Noise

A sound of any kind, especially one that is loud, unwanted, or disagreeable.

Noise Compatibility

The relationship between land uses and ambient noise levels; residential uses are considered to be less compatible with high noise environments than industrial uses.

Noise Ordinance

Locally adopted legislation that regulates noise-producing activities.

Non-automobile Mode

Any mode of transportation that does not use private automobiles; includes bicycling, walking, buses and trains.

Non-conforming Use

A use that was valid when brought into existence but by subsequent regulation becomes no longer conforming. Typically, non-conforming uses are permitted to continue for a designated period of time, subject to certain restrictions.

Non-indigenous Landscaping

Landscaping that is not native to an area and typically requires more water than naturally occurring vegetation. *Also called "exotic" or "non-native" landscaping.*

Non-point Source

Sources of air or water pollution that enter the environment from dispersed sources, such as pollution tainted stormwater runoff from streets and parking areas, rather than at a single point, such as an industrial facility discharge pipe.

Non-profit

Not conducted or maintained for the purpose of making a profit.

Non-residential

Any of a broad category of land uses that do not contain housing; includes commercial, industrial, public, and institutional uses, among others.

Non-renewable Resource

Natural resources, such as fossil fuels and natural gas, which once used cannot be replaced and used again.

Northern California Power Agency (NCPA)

A public agency that delivers electric power to several jurisdictions in Northern California, including Palo Alto.

Off-peak

Not being in the period of maximum use. For traffic, generally refers to the weekday periods before and after the morning and evening commute hours, typically 9 AM to 3 PM and 7 PM to 6 AM. For electric utilities, generally refers to non-business hours, typically 7 PM to 6 AM. Other examples apply.

Off-street Parking

Parking that is provided outside of the right-of-way of a public street, typically in a surface parking lot or parking structure.

On-street Parking

Parking that is provided within the right-of-way of a public street, typically in designated parallel or diagonally striped spaces adjacent to moving traffic lanes.

100-year Flood Plain

The area subject to flooding during a storm that is expected to occur on the average of once every 100 years, based on historical data.

Open Space

Any parcel or area of water or land that is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use for the purpose of (1) the preservation of natural resources; (2) the managed production of resources; (3) outdoor recreation; or (4) public health and safety.

Palo Alto Community Child Care (PACCC)

Non-profit agency that organizes community resources for the development and improvement of child care services.

Palo Alto Foothills Fire Management Plan

Planning document that presents strategies to reduce fuel build-up and the risk of catastrophic wildfire in the Palo Alto foothills.

Palo Alto Municipal Code

Compendium of municipal ordinances and codes, including zoning regulations.

Palo Alto Sanitation Company (PASCO)

Provider of trash collection services to Palo Alto residents and businesses.

Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD)

Special district that provides public education to residents of Palo Alto and a limited number of outlying areas. Owns and operates elementary and secondary schools throughout the City.

Parkway

A low-speed road laid through a garden or park-like landscape, usually with median and roadside plantings. More narrowly, a planted strip between a curb and a sidewalk.

Passive Open Space

Open space that is set aside for the purpose of resource conservation, protection of public safety, or visual enjoyment rather than active recreation.

Pavement Management Program

City of Palo Alto Public Works program that analyzes and prioritizes the maintenance and repair of road surfaces.

Peak Hour

For any given traffic facility, the daily 60-minute period during which traffic volumes are the highest.

Pedestrian-oriented

Form of development that makes the street environment inviting for pedestrians; for commercial areas may be characterized by special sidewalk pavement, zero front and side yard setbacks, buildings of varied architectural styles, street-facing window displays, an absence of front yard parking, benches and other amenities; for residential areas may be characterized by sidewalks, parkways, front porches, low fences, lighting and other amenities.

Performance Standards

Zoning regulations that allow uses based on a particular set of standards of operation rather than on the particular type of use; may be established to limit noise, air pollution, emissions, odor, glare, vibration, dust, dirt, heat, fire hazards, waste, traffic generation, and visual impact.

Permeable Paving

Paving through which water easily passes. *Also called "porous paving."*

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with developmental, physical, or mental impairments that substantially limit one or more life activities.

Planned Community (PC) Ordinance

A local zoning provision that allows flexibility in land uses and development standards for a particular project, subject to controlled conditions and a finding that the project has a public benefit.

Planning Area

The geographic area covered by the Comprehensive Plan; corresponds to all land within the City limits plus land in the unincorporated area that relates directly to the City's planning needs as designated by Santa Clara County LAFCo.

Planning Commission

City Council appointed board of seven Palo Alto residents; responsible for reviewing and making recommendations to the City Council on proposals for development, the subdivision of land, amendments to zoning, land use studies, the annual Capital Improvement Program, the Comprehensive Plan and other development regulations.

Planting Pocket

A small landscaped area within the normally-paved parking lane, used to separate on-street parking spaces from one another and create the impression of narrower streets.

PM_{10}

Particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter; includes a wide range of solid and liquid inhalable particles, including smoke, dust, metallic oxides, and aerosols.

Pocket Park

Very small landscaped area or plaza in an urban area, providing visual relief, passive recreation (sunbathing, reading, dining, etc.), nature enjoyment, or a public gathering space.

Point Source

Sources of air or water pollution that enter the environment at a single point such as a smokestack or drain pipe rather than in a dispersed manner.

Policy

A specific statement of principle or of guiding actions that implies clear commitment but is not mandatory. A general direction that a governmental agency sets to follow, in order to meet its goals and objectives before undertaking an action program.

Precise Plan

A plan for a sub-area of the City that implements the Comprehensive Plan through specific provisions and standards for how individual properties may be developed. *See also Coordinated Area Plan and Specific Plan.*

Preliminary Development Review Ordinance

City Council adopted ordinance that allows applicants to submit conceptual development plans for City Council comment prior to formal submittal for City approval.

Prime Farmland

State Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program classification; indicates farmland that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for the production of crops.

Program

An action, activity, or strategy carried out in response to an adopted policy to achieve a specific goal or objective. Policies and programs establish the "who," "how" and "where" of goals and objectives.

Public Art

Sculpture, painting, murals, and other forms of artwork that are placed in public spaces or in public view to enrich and add visual interest to the built environment.

Public Art Commission (PAC)

City Council appointed seven-member board, responsible for advising the City in matters pertaining to the quality, quantity, scope and style of art in public places, and for acquiring and siting permanent works of art, specifically outdoor sculpture.

Public Facility

See Community Facility

Public/Private Partnership

A merging of public and private resources to achieve an end result or product that would be difficult to achieve through public or private activity alone. May refer to the delivery of services, such as child care, or to the construction of buildings, such as cultural facilities.

Public Way

A public path, walkway, street, alley, trail, or other publicly owned space through which people have the right to pass.

Quasi-judicial Decision Making

Decisions that involve application of existing laws and policies to a specific situation.

Receiver Site

A site to which development rights are transferred or upon which higher densities are allowed in exchange for foregoing development on another site.

Redevelop

To demolish existing buildings; or to increase the overall floor area existing on a property, or both, irrespective of whether a change occurs in land use.

Regional Shopping Center

In Palo Alto, a shopping center with a primary trade area covering at least the Peninsula and South Bay areas, usually anchored by several department stores and offering a broad array of goods and services.

Regional Center

A commercial activity center of citywide and regional significance, with a mix of shopping, offices, and some housing.

Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

Regional agency responsible for implementing State and federal Clean Water Acts. Defines beneficial use of Bay waters, sets and enforces water quality and discharge standards, and formulates plans and strategies to improve water quality.

Regional Water Quality Control Plant (RWQCP)

Wastewater treatment facility operated by the City of Palo Alto and serving the City and nearby environs including East Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View and Stanford.

Regressive Fee

A fee in which the per unit amount lessens as the amount subject to the fee increases

Remote Parking

A parking lot on a site other than the property that it serves, usually at a substantial distance and often connected by shuttle bus.

Renewable Resource

Natural resources, such as water and air, that can be replaced by natural ecological cycles or sound management practices.

Research and Development (R&D)

Economic sector oriented around the development and application of new technologies.

Residential Arterial

Major roadway mainly serving through-traffic; takes traffic to and from expressways and freeways; provides access to adjacent properties, most of which are residential properties located on both sides of the roadway with direct frontages and driveways on that roadway.

Residential Neighborhood

Areas of the City characterized by housing, parks, and public facilities; boundaries are based on patterns of land subdivision and public perceptions about where one neighborhood stops and another begins.

Revitalization

Restoring new life or vigor to an economically depressed area, sometimes through public improvements that spark private investment.

Ridesharing

Two or more persons traveling by any mode, including but not limited to carpooling, vanpooling, buspooling, taxipooling, jitney, and public transit.

Ridge Trail

A regional trail comprised of a series of interconnected trails traversing the hills around San Francisco Bay, forming a ridge line ring around the Bay several hundred miles in length; about 50 percent complete in 1997. The trail is promoted and managed by the non-profit Bay Area Ridge Trail Council.

Right-of-way

The strip of land over which certain transportation and/or other public facilities are built, including roads, railroads, and utility lines.

Riparian Corridor

The strip of land of native vegetation along the banks of a stream or creek established by and dependent on the water supply provided by the stream or creek.

S

San Mateo Transit (SamTrans)

Primarily bus transit system serving San Mateo County, with connections to San Francisco and Santa Clara Counties.

Santa Clara County Hazardous Waste Management Plan

Mandatory planning document prepared pursuant to the AB 2948 (Tanner bill); focuses on the management of hazardous wastes generated within the County and the facilities needed to serve these wastes.

Santa Clara County Urban Runoff Management Plan

County Plan that presents recommendations to local governments to improve the quality of stormwater runoff, identifies actions to be taken by private industry to reduce discharges, and assigns a priority rating system for stormwater control measures.

Santa Clara Valley Congestion Management Program (CMP)

See "Congestion Management Program"

Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program

Locally implemented program to achieve compliance with the federal Clean Water Act; includes an array of measures designed to reduce water pollution from urban runoff.

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)

Agency that provides transit services, conducts transportation planning, and implements the State-mandated Congestion Management Program for Santa Clara County.

Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD)

Regional agency responsible for the management of water resources in the Santa Clara Valley, including groundwater, reservoirs, creeks, and potable water.

Scale

The relative proportion of the size of different elements of the built environment to one another; the measurement of the relationship of one object to another.

Scenic Route

A highway, road, or drive that, in addition to its transportation function, provides opportunities for the enjoyment of scenic resources, views, and access to areas of exceptional beauty or historical interest. Scenic Roads in Palo Alto are University Avenue, Embarcadero Road, Oregon Expressway/Page Mill Road, Sand Hill Road, Foothill Expressway, Interstate 280, Junipero Serra Boulevard, and portions of Arastradero Road.

Second Unit

A self-contained living unit, either attached to or detached from, and in addition to, the primary residential unit on a single lot. *Also called "in-law" unit or "granny flat."*

Sedimentation

Process by which eroding soil is carried by stormwater runoff and deposited, usually along the course of a stream or creek.

Seismic Retrofit

Structural upgrading of buildings to minimize or abate potential hazards in the event of an earthquake.

Seismically-induced Flooding

Includes flooding from earthquake-induced dam failure, tsunamis, and seiches (earthquake-induced waves on lakes and other water bodies).

Senior Care Facility

Housing licensed by the State Health and Welfare Agency, Department of Social Services, typically for elderly residents who are frail and need assistance.

Senior Coordinating Council (SCC)

Non-profit Palo Alto organization providing a broad range of services to seniors including transportation, health care, housing, counseling, social work, support, and home repair.

Sensitive Receptor

Used in noise analyses to describe any land use that is susceptible to the effects of loud noise, including hospitals, nursing homes, schools, child care facilities, and residential areas.

Setback

The horizontal distance between two points such as a property line and a structure.

Shall

That which is obligatory or necessary.

Shared Housing

A single dwelling unit that is occupied by persons of more than one family in order to reduce living expenses and provide social contact, mutual support, and assistance.

Shopping Center

In Palo Alto, a group of commercial establishments, planned, developed, owned or managed as a unit, with off-street parking provided on the site.

Short-term Parking Facility

A parking area designed for rapid turnover, where the duration of stay is usually short (e.g., less than two hours).

Should

Signifies a directive to be honored in the absence of significant countervailing considerations.

Shuttle Bus

A bus or van service that transports passengers between or among fixed stops for free or fare. *See also jitney.*

Sign Ordinance

Local legislation regulating the location and design of signs.

Signage

General term referring to public and private signs and their design attributes.

Significant Adverse Impact

A substantial detrimental effect on the environment as determined by application of the California Environmental Quality Act; may include impacts on air, water, or land resources, among others.

Single Family

A dwelling unit intended for occupancy by one family that may be independent from any other structure or that may share common walls with an adjoining structure.

Single Family Detached Home

A dwelling unit intended for occupancy by one family that is structurally independent from any other dwelling unit.

Single Occupant Vehicle

A private automobile containing a driver and no passengers.

Single Room Occupancy (SRO)

A dwelling unit, typically consisting of a single room of 80 to 250 square feet, with a sink and closet, that may include private bathroom, bathing and kitchen facilities or may utilize communal facilities.

Small Lot Single Family

Single family homes on lots smaller than "standard" City lots; typically less than 5,000 square feet. Usually characterized by narrow (or zero) setbacks, smaller homes, and greater lot coverage than conventional development.

Small Scale Change

A proposed alteration to a previously approved building design or site plan that will not significantly change the character or impact of the project as approved.

Solid Waste

General category that includes organic wastes, paper products, metals, glass, plastics, cloth, brick, rock, soil, leather, rubber, yard wastes, and wood.

Sunnyvale Material and Recovery Transfer (SMaRT) Station©

Public facility in Sunnyvale at which solid waste from Palo Alto and other jurisdictions is sorted to remove recyclable materials for resale.

Source Reduction

Minimizing the quantity of total waste generated by reducing the use of non-recyclable material; replacing disposables and products with reusable materials, reducing packaging, reducing the amount of organic wastes generated, purchasing repairable items, and by using products and materials more efficiently.

Source Reduction and Recycling Element

Locally adopted plan required by the State that describes how the jurisdiction will reduce its solid waste disposal by 25 percent by 1995 and 50 percent by 2000; prepared in accordance with regulations established by the California Integrated Waste Management Board.

Source Separation

Separation of waste materials in a manner that enables the City to gain more control over recycling and quantify the material disposed in its jurisdiction.

South-of-Forest Area (SOFA)

Area of mixed residential, institutional, and commercial uses generally located south of Forest Avenue and south of the University Avenue/Downtown business district.

Southern Connection

A potential new roadway extending from the west end of the Dumbarton Bridge along the edge of the Bay to Highway 101 near the Embarcadero Road/Oregon Expressway interchange.

Special Status Species

Any plant or animal species identified by the State or federal governments as rare, endangered, or threatened; such species require protection and conservation due to their rarity, scarcity, or danger of extinction.

Specific Plan

A legal tool for detailed design and implementation of a defined portion of the area covered by a General Plan. *See also Coordinated Area Plan* and *Precise Plan.*

Sphere of Influence

A boundary established by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) that encompasses all land in the City limits plus land in the unincorporated area that could ultimately become part of the City through annexation.

State Implementation Plan

State Plan required by the Federal Clean Air Act to attain and maintain national ambient air quality standards; adopted by local air quality districts and the State Air Resources Board.

State Historic Buildings Code

Regulations prepared by the State Historic Building Safety Board and adopted by the State of California Building Standards Commission that require enforcing agencies to accept reasonably equivalent alternatives to the California Building Standards Code (CBSC) and other applicable regulations when dealing with qualified historical buildings.

Storm Drain

A device used to capture stormwater runoff, usually from streets or other non-permeable surfaces, and transport it via pipes to ditches, creeks, channels, and other drainage courses.

Storm Drainage Master Plan

City of Palo Alto document setting priorities and identifying long-range improvements to the City's storm drainage system.

Stormwater Collection System

Network of pipes, drains, and channels designed to convey rainwater that does not seep into the earth to creeks and the Bay.

Street Furniture

Those features associated with a street that are intended to enhance the street's physical character and be used by pedestrians, such as benches, trash receptacles, kiosks, lights, and newspaper racks.

Street Trees

Trees planted in medians or along sidewalks in the public right-of-way that are intended to enhance the visual quality of a street, provide shade, absorb pollutants and noise, and provide habitat for urban wildlife.

Street Tree System

Term used to collectively describe all of Palo Alto's street trees.

Subsidence

Localized sinking of the ground, usually caused by groundwater withdrawal.

Superfund

Federal funding source for the clean-up of a priority list of contaminated sites in the United States.

Support Services

Any of a wide array of social services that provide information, assistance and referrals, such as child care, job training and placement, health care, and counseling, to citizens.

Surplus Property

Land or structure owned by a public agency, such as the City of Palo Alto or the School District, that is no longer needed for the delivery of public services or protection of public health, safety, and welfare.

T

Telecommuting

Using computers, telephones, modems, fax machines, and other telecommunications devices to connect to a workplace from a remote location (such as home) rather than physically being in that workplace.

13-Point Parking Program

Program adopted in 1995 by the Palo Alto City Council to manage parking supply and demand in the University Avenue/ Downtown area.

Through-traffic

Traffic with both origins and destinations outside a particular area of reference, such as a City or neighborhood.

Title 24

Regulations adopted in 1977 by the California Energy Commission; contains prescriptive standards for wall, ceiling, and floor insulation, vapor barriers, glazing, infiltration, climate control systems, and water heating equipment.

Traffic Calming

Refers to measures that make permanent, physical changes to streets to slow traffic and/or reduce volumes; also can include education and enforcement measures to promote changes in driver behavior.

Transbay

Pertaining to travel between the east and west sides of San Francisco Bay.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

Program in which a landowner's development rights are relocated from a site where development is considered undesirable (due to environmental impacts) to another site chosen based on its ability to accommodate more development.

Transit Corridor

A major bus or rail route; may also be used to describe land uses along the route.

Transit Mall

Street or portion thereof that has been closed to general auto traffic and redesigned to accommodate bus or light rail vehicles and pedestrians.

Transit-oriented Development

Form of development that maximizes investment in transit infrastructure by concentrating the most intense types of development around transit stations and along transit lines; development in such areas is designed to make transit use as convenient as possible.

Transitional Housing

Shelter provided to the homeless for an extended period, often as long as 18 months, and generally integrated with other social services and counseling programs to assist in the transition to self-sufficiency through the acquisition of a stable income and permanent housing.

Tree Task Force

Ad hoc committee created by the City Council in 1993 to study tree planting, maintenance, and funding issues. This entity evolved into "Canopy" which incorporated in 1996. *See "Canopy"*

Tree Technical Manual

A companion document to the Heritage Tree Ordinance; provides guidelines for required care of Protected Trees and regulates the removal and replacement of both public and private trees.

Trip Reduction

An approach to reducing traffic congestion that minimizes the necessity of driving alone.

U

Underutilized Parcel

Land that is not being used to its full potential and could be redeveloped with a more economically productive use.

Uniform Building Code

A national, standard building code that sets forth minimum standards for construction.

Urban Design

The art and science of giving form, in terms of both beauty and function, to selected urban areas or to whole cities; addresses the location, mass, and design of various components of the environment and combines elements of urban planning, architecture, and landscape architecture.

Urban Forest

Term used to describe trees along streets, in parks, and in yards throughout the City; collectively, these trees form a canopy that supports wildlife and provides environmental benefits.

Urban Service Area

Area where City services and facilities provided by the City and other public agencies are generally available, and where urban development requiring such services should be located.

User-friendly Transit

Transit that is designed to be safe, convenient, and easy to use; may also include use of small, environmentally friendly transit vehicles.

Utilities Fund

Component of Palo Alto's revenue stream generated through rates for various City services including water, sewer, gas, electric, refuse, and storm drainage.

Utilities Advisory Commission (UAC)

City Council appointed five-member board, responsible for advising the City on long-range planning and policy matters relating to the electric, water and gas utilities.

V

Vacancy Rate

The ratio of unoccupied housing units to total housing units; or the ratio of unoccupied leasable non-residential floor area to total leasable non-residential floor area.

Vertical Curb

A curb with well-defined right-angled edges to discourage drivers from parking on the sidewalks.

Vertical Integration

The mixing of one land use over another in a building of two stories or more, for example residential units over a retail store.

Very Low-Income

Households with incomes between 0 and 50 percent of the areawide median family income. Thresholds vary depending on the number of persons in the household.

Village Residential

Land use category that allows specific traditional types of housing that contribute to the pedestrian orientation of a street or neighborhood, at low to medium densities.

Vision

A shared dream of the future characterized by long-term idealistic thinking. Provides the foundation for the development of the goals, policies and programs. A vision is not a binding goal and may not be achievable in the lifetime of those participating in the drafting of the Comprehensive Plan.

Volunteer Transfer Program (schools)

Program that enables students in one School District to attend school in another as authorized by the Allen bill.

Voucher

A certificate worth a particular dollar amount but transferable only for a specific commodity (such as rent or transit) rather than for cash.

VTA

See Santa Clara County Valley Transportation Authority.

W

Walkable Neighborhood

An area designed and constructed in such a way to provide and encourage pleasant, easy and efficient pedestrian movement.

Wastewater Recycling

The practice of using highly treated effluent from a wastewater treatment plant for landscape irrigation and other non-potable purposes.

Water Resources

Term used to collectively describe groundwater (aquifers), surface water (bays, rivers, creeks, oceans, etc.), precipitation, and water supply.

Western Area Power Administration (WAPA)

Federal agency that oversees the allocation of federal energy resources in the Western United States.

Wetland

A lowland area, such as a marsh, that is saturated with moisture all or part of the year. Standards for defining wetland boundaries consider hydrology, vegetation, and soil conditions.

Williamson Act

Known formally as the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, the Williamson Act is a state law designed as an incentive to retain prime agricultural land and slow its conversion to urban uses. Each year landowners are offered reduced property tax assessments if they agree to not develop their land for the following ten years. The lowered assessments are based on the agricultural use of the land rather than its "market value."

Z

Zone "A"

Term used by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to indicate those areas subject to inundation by a 100-year flood.

Zone "AE"

Term used by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to indicate areas subject to inundation by a 100-year flood, where the flood level is referenced to a fixed elevation relative to sea level.

Zone "AO"

Term used by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to indicate areas subject to inundation by a 100-year flood, but only at depths of one to three feet and with flooding typically caused by sheet flow on sloping terrain.

Zoning Map

Map that depicts the division of the City into districts or "zones" in which different uses are allowed and different building and lot size restrictions apply.

Zoning Ordinance

A set of land use regulations enacted by the City to create districts that permit certain land uses and prohibit others. Land uses in each district are regulated according to type, density, height, and the coverage of buildings.

#

100-year Flood Plain

The area subject to flooding during a storm that is expected to occur on the average of once every 100 years, based on historical data.

13-Point Parking Program

Program adopted in 1995 by the Palo Alto City Council to manage parking supply and demand in the University Avenue/ Downtown area.

1989 Citywide Land Use and Transportation Study

1989 City Council approved Palo Alto planning document that established non-residential development limits (in square feet) for different geographic areas in the City.

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Appendices

1. BAAQMD Local Action List

2. Housing Element Technical Document

The Housing Element portion of this Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 4) is accompanied by the Housing Element Technical Document dated Fall 1997, prepared by Freitas and Freitas, Planning and Engineering Consultants, Santa Cruz.

BAAQMD Local Action List

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has prepared a list of actions that are intended to encourage drivers, and especially work-related commuters, to use alternatives to the single occupant automobile.The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Congestion Management Program (CMP) has divided the BAAQMD's actions into those that are feasible to implement immediately by individual cities and actions that require multi-jurisdictional implementation efforts. The items on the CMP's immediate local implementation list are identified below.

BAAQMD/CMA Local Action List

1. *Bicycle Storage Facilities at Transit Centers.* This action consists of adding bicycle storage facilities at designated transit centers, including:
   - park-and-ride lots
   - rail transit stations
   - major transit transfer stations

2. *Improved Roadside Bicycle Facilities.* This action consists of improving roadside bicycle facilities and connections to bicycle routes.

3. *Improve Pedestrian Circulation.* This action consists of improving public sidewalks and pathways within existing commercial, employment and mixed use centers.

4. *Shuttle Service to Rail Transit Stations [existing development].* This action consists of performing an initial rail station shuttle feasibility study for major employment centers (defined as having over 750 employees or 300,000 gross square feet of building area) located over 2,500 feet from a rail transit station.

5. *Transit Stop Improvements.* This action consists of improving transit stops to encourage transit use as well as improving adjoining roadways to improve traffic flow and/or reduce delays to transit vehicles entering the traffic flow.

6. *Transportation Demand Management Public Information Programs.* This action consists of providing public information on availability and benefits of transportation alternatives to the single occupant automobile as well as the air and water quality impacts of transportation decisions.

7. *Peak-period Parking and Delivery Restrictions.* This action consists of restricting curbside parking and deliveries during peak periods to improve traffic flow.

8. *Traffic Signal Timing and Synchronization Program.* This action consists of optimizing the timing of traffic signals to reduce vehicle delay and vehicle emissions at intersections.

9. *Urban Area Traffic Flow Improvements.* This action consists of making traffic flow improvements within congested urbanized areas to control traffic flows rather than to add capacity. These improvements may include items such as the following:
   - Additional turn lanes at intersections;
   - HOV lanes;
   - Turning two-way streets into one-way streets;
   - Computerized traffic & transit control and management on arterials;
   - Turn restrictions at intersections (peak period and all day);
   - Designating reversible lanes to serve peak direction traffic flows.

10. *Parking Preference for HOVs.* This action consists of providing preferential parking for high occupancy vehicles (HOVs) at employment and activity centers.

11. *Bicycle Facilities at Development Projects.* This action consists of requiring bicycle storage facilities and showers/changing areas for all new employment centers that have 100 or more employees.

12. *Building Placement on Site.* This action consists of placing new buildings on their sites in a manner designed to encourage alternative forms of transportation.

13. *Pedestrian Circulation System: New Development.* This action consists of building safe, attractive, and useful public sidewalks and pathways in all new development projects.

14. *Bicycle Facilities at New Residential Development.* This action consists of requiring secure bicycle storage facilities at all new residential development projects that do not have private garages.

15. *Shuttle Service [new development].* This action consists of providing shuttle transit service to rail transit stations and other locations. All new employment center development projects with either a minimum of 750 employees or 300,000 gross square feet would provide shuttle service to and from a rail transit station, unless the city has performed a feasibility study and determined that his action is infeasible for a particular development project.

16. *Transit Stop Improvements.* This action consists of improving transit stops to encourage transit use as well as improving adjoining roadways to improve traffic flow and/or reduce delays to transit vehicles entering the traffic flow. Cities would work with SCVTA to require new development projects to assist in provision of roadway improvements (including bus turnouts and bus bulbs) at bus stops affected by the development project and transit station amenities (such as shelters, signs, maps, schedules, public telephones, and lighting) at transit stops affected by the development project.

Source: Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Congestion Management Program, Technical Standards and Procedures, "Requirements for Deficiency Plans", November 18, 1992.

City of Palo Alto

Housing Element Technical Document 1999-2006

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Note: The data used in this document originated from a variety of sources and time frames. The majority of statistical information was obtained from U.S. Census data, however other data was also used to supplement year 2000 Census data where that data was incomplete. Inconsistencies in the data have been corrected as much as feasible but there still may remain some differences in data reporting due to the time frame when the data was collected or the agency collecting the data..

Executive Summary

Following are some of the highlights or more significant information contained in the 1999-2006 Housing Element Technical Document:

Household and Housing Data

Housing Costs and Income

Housing costs for ownership units more than doubled between 1996 to 2000 and rental housing costs nearly doubled between 1996 and 2001. Countywide household median income increased only 29% between 1996 and 2000. This means that more households are probably overpaying for housing in 2000 than in 1996.

Palo Alto's Population Mix Will Change:

While Palo Alto's total population is not expected to increase significantly in future years, it is anticipated that certain groups within the population will change in size and proportion. In specific, the number and percentage of older adults is expected to continue to increase. Additionally, although the number of families with children have increased over the last 10 years, the number of persons of childbearing age has decreased in recent years and this may affect the percentage and number of children in the population.

More Single Parent Households and Seniors

The number of single parent households grew rapidly in the 1990s increasing from 7% of all family households to 12%. These households have considerably less income than other family households and are more at risk of becoming homeless. The population of those aged 65 years or older increased by 5.8%, slightly higher than the overall 5% population growth of the City. Seniors, many of whom are on fixed incomes, continue to need more affordable housing.

Rate of Housing Production Has Decreased:

Palo Alto's highest rate of housing production was during the decade between 1950-60 when approximately one-third of all of Palo Alto's housing units were constructed. Since then, however, the rate of housing production has continued to decrease. From 1970-80 the annual rate of housing production was 240 units per year, however, from 1990-2000 the annual rate of housing production had decreased to 97 units per year.

Palo Alto Is Essentially A "Built-Out" Community:

Only 0.5% of the land area in the City is vacant and there are few opportunities to annex additional lands in the future.

Housing Is Expensive:

The median sales price for a single family, detached home in Palo Alto in the year 2000 was $1,006,600. This sales price would require an annual income of approximately $275,000 in order to purchase a unit using traditional underwriting criteria. A condominium/townhome sold for a median sales price of $546,600 in the same time period and would require an annual income of approximately $163,000 in order to afford the unit.

Home ownership Is Only Available To Higher Income Households:

Without a public subsidy, home ownership is only affordable to households with above moderate-incomes. Very low-, low- and moderate-income households cannot afford the median sales price home ownership units.

Rental Units Are Only Affordable to Households Earning 115% or More of the County Median Income:

Above moderate-income households and moderate-income households earning 115% of the County median income in Palo Alto can afford average rental rates but most moderate-, low- and very low-income households are priced out of the market.

Housing Achievements (1998-2000):

The City has actively supported the development and preservation of affordable housing opportunities through the following activities:

1. "Below Market Rate" (BMR) Program

Between 1998 and 2002 the City added 68 new rental units for low-income households and 8 new ownership units for moderate-income households under its Below Market Rate program.

2. Assistance to Non-Profit Organizations

Financial and technical assistance has been provided to assist non-profits in:

- Providing housing services, such as:
    - Senior Home Improvement Repair Program
    - Shared Housing Programs
    - Homeless Assistance
    - Accessibility Improvements to Existing Housing Developments
    - Fair Housing and Information Services

- Developing Affordable Housing:
    - Acquisition and Rehabilitation of the Palo Alto Gardens (156 units) and the Sheridan Apartments (57 units).
    - Construction of the Alma Place Single Room Occupancy very low-income rental housing facility (107 units).
    - Construction of Page Mill Court (24 units), which provides permanent, affordable rental housing for very low-income persons with developmental disabilities.

3. Funding Assistance

Between 1995 and 2000, Palo Alto expended $4.7 million in CDBG funds for housing development, housing programs and administrative costs for housing related services. In fiscal years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000, Palo Alto expended nearly $2 million of its Residential and Commercial Housing Reserve funds in loans or permanent funding of affordable housing projects.

4. Rehabilitation Assistance

The City provided assistance to very low- and low- income households to rehabilitate their housing units through the Rental Rehabilitation Program and the CDBG Program. The projects assisted included the following:

- Rehabilitation of the water system for the 66 unit Arastradero Park Apartments. New water lines were provided for each unit under this project.

- Re-roofing Building "A" which contains 59 units of the 120 unit Stevenson House for low-income seniors

Housing Needs

Affordable Housing Is Needed:

Affordable housing is the most significant housing need for very low-, low- and moderate income households and for "special need" households such as the elderly, the disabled, single parent households that are the most risk of becoming homeless, large families in overcrowded conditions, and the homeless. More higher density rental housing, practically the only affordable housing in Palo Alto, is needed to meet the needs of these groups.

New Construction Projects In The Future Must Contain Affordable Housing Units:

There will be several opportunities in the future for the City to review proposals for residential developments. Affordable housing, consistent with City policies, shall be included as a requirement in approving any of these proposals.

Palo Alto's Existing Housing Stock Needs To Be Preserved and Maintained:

Existing units in the housing stock must continue to be maintained and affordable units must be monitored to ensure that they continue to be preserved as affordable housing for very low- and low-income households.

More Non-Residential Lands Must be Converted to Residential Use:

There is only about 15 acres of vacant residential land in Palo Alto. To meet the City's housing needs, more non-residential lands must be converted to residential use or mixed use with a minimum component of residential development. The City will implement an aggressive Housing Opportunities Study to designate and rezone the lands most appropriate for this conversion process.

Continue to Support Non-Profit Organizations Providing Housing Services:

Non-profit groups are very active in the Palo Alto area in providing housing related services. The City should continue its tradition of supporting those organizations with technical and financial support.

Continue and Assess Current Housing Programs:

The City's BMR Program has been operative since 1974. While it is recognized as being successful in providing affordable housing opportunities, it is an appropriate time to review and evaluate the overall results of the program and identify possible new directions for the future. Current requirements for Below Market Rate Housing will need to be increased if the City is to be able to create a substantial number of affordable housing units. Program policies and requirements need to be coordinated so that all program documents reflect the same information. The City should assess the effectiveness of programs such as the second unit or "cottage" provisions, incentives for mixed use projects, allowing for small lot subdivision and increasing minimum densities.

Evaluate Existing and Proposed Ordinances:

The City should evaluate the Planned Development process and its requirement of a "public benefit" finding that is perceived as adding to housing cost. The City should assess the need for a "Single Room Occupancy" (SRO) Ordinance or special provisions within the Zoning Ordinance to more readily enable the construction of SROs. The City should modify its parking requirements to encourage more housing where jobs, services and transit decrease the parking need and where parking costs can contribute to excessively high housing costs. The City must also amend the Zoning Ordinance to implement the programs of the Housing Element to ensure that all residential lands are utilized as fully as possible and that development standards in the Zoning Ordinance will allow maximum development potential to be achieved.

Increase the Contribution from Commercial/Industrial Development to Meeting Affordable Housing Needs:

The City continues to have a severe jobs/housing imbalance creating a huge unmet demand for housing that contributes to increased housing costs. New job generating development continues to exacerbate this situation. The commercial and industrial housing in-lieu fee for projects impacting housing should be periodically re-evaluated to ensure that new commercial/industrial development contributes its share to the City's efforts to produce affordable housing.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Comprehensive Plans and Housing Elements

Cities and counties in California are required to develop Comprehensive or General Plans, which are long-range planning documents. A community's Comprehensive Plan typically provides an extensive and long-term strategy for the physical development of the community and any adjoining land. There are seven subject areas that must be addressed in a community's Comprehensive Plan, although other subjects can be added based on the community's needs and objectives. The seven mandated "Elements" that each Comprehensive Plan must contain include Land Use, Circulation, Conservation, Open Space, Noise, Safety and Housing Elements.

The Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan is mandated by State law to contain certain subject areas and is reviewed by the State's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), to determine if it complies with State Housing Element Law, specifically Article 10.6 of the Government Code. Article 10.6 requires communities to include the following information in their Housing Element:

- evaluation of existing housing needs,
- estimates of projected housing needs,
- review of previous Housing Element goals and programs,
- inventory of adequate sites for housing and evaluation of infrastructure condition and requirements,
- identification of governmental and non-governmental constraints on housing production,
- development of housing programs to address identified needs, and
- quantifiable objectives for the construction, rehabilitation and conservation of housing.

State law also requires Housing Elements to be updated every five-years to ensure each jurisdiction addresses its changing housing needs and identifies sufficient opportunities to provide housing for all economic segments of the community. This update covers the years 1999-2006 and builds on the progress made in previous Palo Alto Housing Elements.

Housing Elements: City of Palo Alto

The Technical Document that follows is part of the Housing Element for the City of Palo Alto. It is anticipated that the Housing Element, including this Technical Document, will be adopted by the City Council in December 2002. The Housing Element covers the seven and a half year period from January 1, 1999 to June 30, 2006. This Technical Document was prepared pursuant to Article 10.6 of the Government Code (State Housing Element Law) and was developed to address the issues listed above.

The City has previously adopted Housing Elements, the most recent being the 1998-2003 City of Palo Alto Housing Element. The 1998-2003 version of the Housing Element was an extension of the 1990 Housing Element and utilized the revised housing needs projected by ABAG for the 1990-1995 time frame since more recent housing need numbers had not yet been developed by ABAG. At that time, the City recognized that ABAG was in the process of updating its regional housing need projections and that the Housing Element would have to be revised once new fair share housing need numbers were developed. The new fair share numbers were approved by ABAG in May 2000 for the period of January 1, 1999 and June 30, 2006. This 1999-2006 Housing Element updates the 1998-2003 Housing Element and reflects the planning period and policies of the City's 1998-2010 Comprehensive Plan. The City's Housing Element also includes information not required by Article 10.6 but important to the evaluation of housing needs. For example, Chapter 4 of this Technical Document is a comprehensive inventory of the existing affordable housing resources in the City. This inventory was designed so that the reader would be able to acquire a complete overview of the range of housing opportunities currently available in Palo Alto. This inventory provides information that is important in order to evaluate housing needs and is supplemental to that required by State Housing Element Law.

Citizen Participation

The 1999-2006 Palo Alto Housing Element was prepared with the assistance of considerable community participation, including three public forums, an ad hoc Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and a Focus Group. The TAC consisted of eight members representing a variety of community groups and public entities that had an interest both in the housing problems facing Palo Alto and in finding solutions to those problems. The groups represented on the TAC included: the Palo Alto Housing Corporation, Peninsula Interfaith Action (PIA), the Planning Commission, the League of Women Voters, and the Palo Alto Unified School District. The TAC provided comments and advice on the City's housing needs and the policies the City proposed to use to address those needs. It also reviewed draft versions of the Housing chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and made formal recommendations on those documents to the Planning Commission and the City Council.

The TAC strove to represent, or at least identify, the different housing interests of various segments of the community. It was a two-way conduit for delivering information between the City and the community and provided a forum for the members of each group on the TAC to share their knowledge and perspectives regarding housing needs and solutions.

Although each TAC member represented the views of their respective groups, they also consulted with other individuals in the community. All TAC meetings were open to the public.

The Focus Group consisted of 13 members representing for-profit and non-profit developers, planners, architects, and real estate interests with technical expertise on housing issues. The Focus Group provided advice on the feasibility and practicality of a variety of methods that could be used to address housing needs. In particular, the group was asked to: comment on the barriers to the production of affordable housing; identify which City policies and programs did or did not work; and, suggest incentives, policy changes, and regulatory changes would be useful to encourage the production of affordable housing. The Focus Group met once in August and this meeting was open to the public.

The first public forum, Action for Affordable Housing, was held on February 10, 2001, sponsored by the Human Relations Committee. The forum discussed ways to accommodate affordable housing and resulted in preparation of a Housing Supply Action Plan. On August 27, 2001 the City held a community forum on the Housing Element. The purpose of the forum was to inform the public about existing housing programs and issues facing Palo Alto as well as to elicit ideas regarding strategies to further promote housing opportunities in the City. About 100 persons attended the forum. After a welcome by the Mayor and a background overview by the City Manager of existing efforts and constraints to providing housing in Palo Alto, all participants were asked to identify individually the most significant issue or concern regarding the housing challenge in the City of Palo Alto. The forum participants then broke into four groups. The groups evaluated a range of topics including ways of increasing the number of housing units for all income levels, methods of preserving the existing housing stock and limiting the loss of residential units, balancing housing needs with service demands, and changes to the Zoning Ordinance that would enable increased housing production. At the conclusion of the group sessions, the group participants selected the top three issues discussed and reported those to the reconvened forum.

These comments were considered in the preparation of the draft Housing Element and Technical Document and were forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Using the comments and recommendations of the TAC, the Focus Group, and the community, the consultant and City staff prepared an administrative draft Housing Element and Technical Document. Notice of availability of the draft was published in a local newspaper and mailed to the individuals and organizations on the Housing Element update mailing list and posted in accordance with City policy prior to Planning Commission and City Council discussion. (Each individual who expressed interest in the Housing Element update process was added to a mailing list and was informed of all update activities.) Copies were available for review at City Hall and six City branch libraries as well as the City's Web page. The Housing Element and Technical Document were reviewed at public meetings conducted by the Planning Commission and the City Council.

The draft Housing Element and Technical document were reviewed by the Planning Commission on October 2, 2001 and by the City Council on October 9, 2001, to confirm the general policy direction of the draft. At the October 9 meeting the City Council raised several concerns regarding the direction of the draft Housing Element and decided that revisions of the draft Housing Element were necessary. The Council directed staff to revise the draft to address six key concerns before forwarding it to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review. Several neighborhood groups also spoke at the hearing and requested an additional community forum meeting. The Council granted this request and a new community forum was conducted on December 13 which focused on the concerns raised by the City Council and the community members participating in the October 9 public hearing. The Council's concerns and community comments from the December 13 community forum were considered in the preparation of the revised draft Housing Element, which was discussed by the City Council at a public hearing on February 4, 2002. The Council recommended forwarding the draft Housing Element to HCD, and it was submitted to HCD later that month for the mandatory 60-day review and comment period.

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing in June 2002 and recommended adoption of the Housing Element and Technical Document to the City Council. Recommendations of the Planning Commission were considered by the City Council at a public hearing on December 2, 2002 at which time the Council adopted the Housing Element and Technical Document.

Chapter 2: Population and Households

Population Growth

During the decade between 1990-2000, Palo Alto's population increased by 5%. In 1990, the City's population was 55,900 and by 2000, that number had increased by 2,698 persons to 58,598. This was one of the lowest rates of population growth for communities in Santa Clara County for that decade. Santa Clara County's total population increased by 12% and the State of California's population increased by 13.6% for that same time period.

Illustration #1: Population by City, Santa Clara County, 1990 -2000

City	1990	2000	Growth 1990-2000
Campbell	36,048	38,138	6%
Cupertino	40,263	50,546	26%
Gilroy	31,487	41,464	32%
Los Altos	26,303	27,693	5%
Los Altos Hills	7,514	7,902	5%
Los Gatos	27,357	28,592	5%
Milpitas	50,686	62,698	24%
Monte Sereno	3,287	3,483	6%
Morgan Hill	23,928	33,556	40%
MountainView	67,460	70,708	5%
Palo Alto	**55,900**	**58,598**	**5%**
San Jose	782,248	894,943	15%
Santa Clara	93,613	102,361	9%
Saratoga	28,061	29,843	6%
Sunnyvale	117,229	131,760	12%
Unincorporated	106,193	100,300	-6%
Total County	**1,497,577**	**1,682,585**	12%

Source: 1990, 2000 U.S. Census

Although the 1990-2000 population growth rate of Palo Alto was in the lowest tier of population growth in Santa Clara County, it was considerably greater than the 1% growth rate recorded for 1980-1990. This increase in population is due both to an increase in the number of dwelling and an increase in household size. Palo Alto's housing stock grew by 860 units between 1990 and 2000, an increase of 3.4%. Average household size increased from 2.2 to 2.3 persons per household during that same period.

This increase in household size is probably due to the increase in the number of family households with children under 18. In 1990, 22.4% of all Palo Alto households contained children 18 years old or younger. By 2000, 27.2% of all households contained children 18 years old or younger and represents the resurgence of the family in Palo Alto. This change

in household size was anticipated by a demographic analysis (Lapkoff and Gobalet Study) conducted in 1992 for the Palo Alto Unified School District. In that analysis, the authors reported that enrollments in the kindergarten and elementary grades were beginning to rise in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Part of this increase was attributable, they felt, to higher birth rates among the population. The increase in household size might also be attributable to young adult children staying or returning to their family home ("boomerang kids") because of the high cost of securing housing on their own.

In addition to the increase in the number of family households with children, there has been a small decrease in the number of non-family households from 10,865 (44% of all households) in 1990 to 10,623 (42% of households) in 2000. The combination of more family households and fewer non-family households helps to explain the increase in household size although this trend is likely to be short lived since the number of people in their childbearing years dropped from 24,863 in 1990 to 21,872 in 2000, a decrease of about 12%. Household size is, therefore, likely to decline in the future as the population of Palo Alto ages.

Palo Alto's population is not expected to increase significantly in the coming years. One of the primary reasons for this is that the City is essentially "built out" and there is little available land for new residential construction. In addition, the trend in Palo Alto has been towards a predominance of households with older household heads and no children at home despite the recent increase in family households during the last decade, which, as indicated above, is not likely to continue. The Lapkoff and Gobalet Study predicts that "Palo Alto's population will get older, not younger, during the coming decades". Further, their analysis indicates that migrants to Palo Alto in the future will also likely be older, have two incomes and be beyond the child bearing ages.

Palo Alto's population is expected to grow slowly over the next decade due to the decline in the child bearing age cohort (18-44) of the population and limited housing opportunities. Some immigration of higher income families into Palo Alto will continue given the City's good schools and good neighborhoods. However, as the existing population ages, the elderly population will increase and household size will eventually decline.

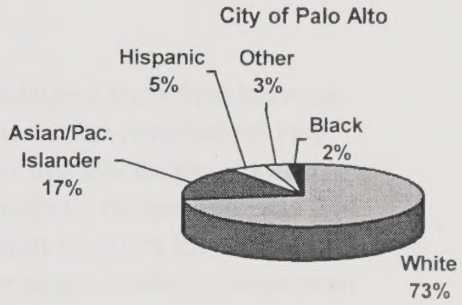
Population by Race/Ethnicity

In evaluating Palo Alto's racial distribution, the 2000 U.S.Census data indicate that Palo Alto's population is primarily composed of White persons. Approximately 75.8% of the population was identified as White in 2000. The next largest population group by race in the City was Asian or Pacific Islanders who comprised 17.3% of the City population. The remaining population groups were Hispanic who represented 4.6% of the population, Black persons who comprised about 2% of the total citywide population and other or mixed racial categories making up the remainder of the population. By comparison, in 1990 Whites represented 82% of the population, Hispanics 5%, Blacks 3% and others, including Asian or Pacific Islanders 10%. The fastest growing racial category between 1990 and 2000 was the Asian or Pacific Islander community which expanded by 74%.

Although Palo Alto's population has become somewhat more diverse between 1990 and 2000, its share of minority racial groups is still less than the countywide average in all categories. For example, 24% of Santa Clara County's population is Hispanic while only 4.6% of the City's population identified themselves as Hispanic in 2000. Palo Alto's Asian/Pacific Islander population is moving towards the countywide average for that group. The illustration on the next page graphically illustrates the City's ethnic/racial proportions with a comparison chart included of City and County statistics from the 2000 U.S. Census.

Illustration #2: Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2000

	City of Palo Alto	Santa Clara County
Population	58,598	1,682,585
White	72.8%	44.2%
Black	2.0%	2.8%
Hispanic	4.6%	24.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	17.3%	25.9%
Other	3.3%	3.1%



Source 2000 U.S. Census Percentages *Rounded.* The other category is remnant of population not positively identified under any other racial or ethnic category.

Population by Age

The median age of Palo Alto's population has increased dramatically over the last three decades. In 1970, the median age was 29.5 years for males and 33.7 years for females. By 1990,the median age of Palo Alto residents had increased by approximately 6.5 years from 1970, climbing to 36.0 years for males and 40.0 years for females. In the year 2000, the median age for the entire population of Palo Alto was 40.2 years, which is considerably higher than the County median age of 34 years.

This "aging" of the population is evident in the increase in Palo Alto's senior population. In 1970, persons age 65 and over numbered 5,789, constituting 10.3% of the City's total population. By 2000, the senior population had increased by 3,351 to 9,140 persons, or 15.6% of the City's total population. Therefore, Palo Alto's senior population increased nearly 58% over the 1970-2000 time period.

Illustration #3: Population by Age: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000

Age Groups	1970	1980	1990	2000	Change 1970-2000
Pre-School (Under 5)	3,205	2,168	2,764	2,970	-235
School Age (5-17)	12,682	8,998	6,999	9,436	-3,246
Child Bearing (18-44)	21,472	24,004	24,863	21,872	+400
Middle Age (45-64)	12,818	12,647	12,527	15,180	+2,362
Senior (65 and Over)	5,789	7,408	8,747	9,140	+3,351
TOTAL PERSONS	**55,966**	**55,225**	**55,900**	**58,598**	

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990 (Report STF3, P 7 + 13)

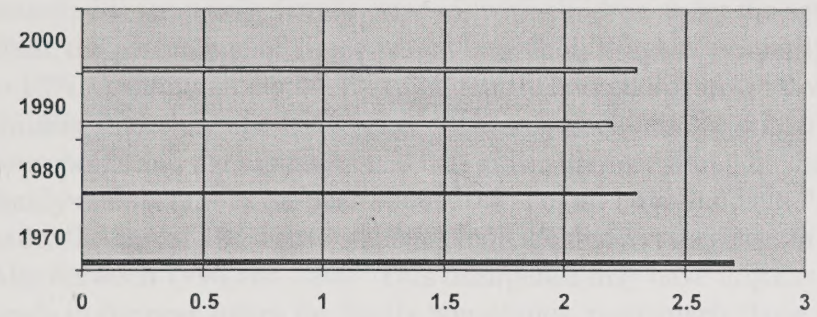
As the table above indicates, the pre-school and school age populations increased between 1990 and 2000 after two decades of decline. The middle age and senior populations also increased significantly over the last decade. The only age cohort that has decreased in size is the child bearing age group, which indicates that population growth by natural increase will begin to decline again over the next decade. The senior population is, given the substantial increase in the middle age population, likely to increase over the next decade, perhaps even more rapidly than the last three decades.

Households and Household Size

For purposes of evaluating housing supply and demand, it is useful to translate information from population figures to household data. According to the 2000 Census, there were 58,598 persons living in Palo Alto. Of this total, 668 were living in group quarters. The remaining 57,930 persons were living in households and the total number of households in the City in 2000 was 25,216.

Household size is an important consideration when addressing housing issues. The number of people occupying a housing unit affects the size and condition of the unit, as well as the demand for additional units in the housing market. For example, a continued decrease in household size with an increase in population would indicate a demand for additional housing units to accommodate the new household formations. On the other hand, dramatic increases in household size could indicate a number of situations such as "unrelated" members of households living together or an increase in the number of households with children. The 2000 household size in Palo Alto was 2.3 persons per household,which was a slight increase from the 1990 household size of 2.2 persons per household.

Illustration #4: Household Size, 1970-2000



1970 Household Size - 2.7 Persons Per Household
1980 Household Size - 2.3 Persons Per Household
1990 Household Size - 2.2 Persons Per Household
2000 Household Size - 2.3 Persons Per Household

Source: U. S. Census 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000 data

Households by Type

According to 2000 U.S. Census data, approximately 14,593 households or 57.9% of all households were "family" households and 10,623 households (42.1% of total households) were "non-family" households. A family household is one in which a household lives with one or more persons related to him or her by birth, marriage or adoption. A non-family household is one in which a householder lives alone or with non-relatives only.

Family households are by definition typically larger in size than non-family households because family households consist of a minimum of two persons while non-family households can be single person households. As would be expected, then, in Palo Alto there are more persons living in family than non-family households. Of the total 58,598 persons in Palo Alto in 2000, approximately 73.5% lived in family households (43,049 persons) and 26.2% (14,881 persons) lived in non-family households. The remaining 1.1% of the population (668 persons) were living in group quarter situations.

In evaluating this data from a historical perspective, it appears that the percentage of persons living in family households decreased between 1970 and 1990 but then increased slightly in 2000. In 1970, 83% of the population lived in family households whereas by 1990 that percentage had decreased to 72.3% before increasing to about 73.5% in 2000. Similarly, the percentage of persons in non-family households increased from 18% in 1970 to 26.2% in 1990 but then increased to 27.7% in 2000.

The trend of having fewer households with children under the age of 18 years at home than other types of family households was also reversed between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, only 32.6% of family households were a married couple with children under the age of 18 years. By 2000, the percentage of such households increased to 38.8%. Another, perhaps more

significant change for the future of housing in Palo Alto was the increase in the number of single parent households. In 1990, 7% of the family households were single parent households (primarily female-headed) with children under the age of 18 years at home. By 2000, the percentage of single parent households (again, primarily female-headed) increased to 12% Approximately 60.4% of all family households in 1990 were households with no children under the age of 18 years. (These households are primarily married couple households and the assumption is that either they are living by themselves or with other family members.) In the year 2000, 50.8% of all households in Palo Alto contained children under the age of 18. These statistics indicate that a resurgence of the family occurred in Palo Alto between 1990 and 2000. This resurgence may have impacts on the City's housing needs in the near future for family households, particularly those headed by a female single parent.

Households by Income Level

Generally, Palo Alto households have higher than average median family incomes. The 1990 U.S.Census data indicated that the median family household income in Palo Alto was $68,737. This was considerably more than the median family household income of $53,670 for the County of Santa Clara for the same time period. In 2000, Census data indicates that the median family household income for Santa Clara County was $74,335 and the City of Palo Alto's median family household income was $90,377. Palo Alto households maintained their previous proportional advantage in higher family incomes.

According to the 2000 Census, while there were many high income households in Palo Alto, there were also households on more limited incomes. An interesting statistic from the 2000 Census data is that 14% of all Palo Alto households reported that their annual household incomes were less than $25,000. This percentage is similar to the countywide average of 13% of all Santa Clara County households reporting incomes of $25,000 or less. In other words, Palo Alto had the same proportion of households with limited incomes as the County as a whole in 1999. However, Palo Alto also had over twice as many households proportionally who had incomes over $200,000 in 1999 than the rest of the County. It should be noted, however, that a $25,000 annual income would not be an accurate reflection in the year 2000 of the number of lower or "limited" income households in Palo Alto. For example, HUD considers a family of four earning $43,500 or less and a single person earning $30,450 or less very low income households. A $25,000 income would be inadequate to meet the housing and other needs of most households in Palo Alto.

Illustration #5: Household Income Distribution, 1999

	$25k	$25k-50k	$50k-100k	$100k-200k	>$200k
City of Palo Alto	14%	15%	26%	29%	17%
County of Santa Clara	13%	18%	34%	27%	8%

Source: 2000 US Census Data

The definition of income level varies depending on the government entity or the program. For housing purposes, the jurisdictions in Santa Clara County, including Palo Alto, use

HUD's determination of County median income ($87,000 for a family of four in 2000) and its definition of household income levels described below:

Very Low-income:
Households with incomes between 0-50% of County median family income.
2000 limit for a family of 4: **$43,500**

Low-income:
Households with incomes between 51-80% of County median family income.
2000 limit for a family of 4: **$69,600**

Moderate-income:
Households with incomes between 81-120% of County median income.
2000 limit for a family of 4: **$104,400**

Above-Moderate Income:
Households with incomes greater than 120% of areawide median family income.

As noted, various agencies and programs use different definitions of household income. In Palo Alto, the following modifications applied in 2000:

Federal:
CDBG and HUD Section 8 rental programs: Low-income maximum was 66% of County median income with a 2000 limit for a family of 4 of $53,853 . Low-income Housing Tax Credit and HUD HOME Program: Low-Income maximum for rental units is 60% of County median income with a 2000 limit for a family of 4 of $52,200.

Local:
City of Palo Alto BMR Program: Moderate-income for ownership program is 80-100% of areawide median family income. The 2000 limit for a family of 4: $87,000.

The federal government adjusts income limits on a regular basis to reflect changes in household income levels. Listed below are the maximum income levels for very low- and low-income households for Santa Clara County, including the City of Palo Alto for 2000.

Illustration #6: HUD Annual Household Income Limits, 2000

Persons in Household	Very Low-income Maximum (50% *of Median Income)*	Low-income Maximum *(66% of Median Income)*
1	$30,450	$39,850
2	$34,800	$45,550
3	$39,150	$51,250
4	$43,500	$56,950
5	$47,000	$61,500
6	$50,450	$66,050

Note: 2000 Santa Clara County median income for a family of four is $87,000

Using 2000 U.S. Census data, there were 6,387 households earning less than $45,000 (approximately 25% of Palo Alto households) and an additional 2,257 households earning less than $60,000 (approximately 9% of Palo Alto households). Applying the federal HUD definition of income to the 2000 Census, listed below are the maximum income levels for households in Santa Clara County based on a countywide median income of $74,335. Very low and low income households represented approximately 34% of all Palo Alto households.

Very Low 0-50% of County Median Household Income	= $37,177
Low 51-80% of County Median Household Income	= $59,484
Moderate 81-120% of County Median Household Income	= $89,202
Above Moderate >120%	= >$89,202

Note: 2000 Census definition of household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence.

Employment Trends

In its document entitled ***Projections 2000***, the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) estimated that 98,450 jobs would be contained within Palo Alto's jurisdictional boundary by the year 2000, an increase of over 7,000 jobs from the 91,370 jobs estimated to be in Palo Alto in 1995. This estimate reflects the economic boom Santa Clara County was undergoing in the last half of the 1990s. Since the middle of 2000 and through the first half of 2001, there has been an economic downturn in the high technology and manufacturing sectors which has reduced the number of jobs in the County and Palo Alto. The exact job reduction is not yet known and the duration of the economic downturn cannot be accurately projected. However, it is likely that Palo Alto currently contains at least 92,000 jobs (slightly more than it had in 1995) and that it will eventually contain 98,000-99,000 jobs within the next several years if the economy recovers in the near term. ABAG projects that over 50% of all new jobs in the region will be in the service sector, 11% in the retail sector, 19% in the professional and other sectors. Palo Alto's job growth will probably be close to this estimated distribution.

What is important about these employment trends is that Palo Alto will continue to maintain its jobs/housing imbalance heavily skewed to the jobs side of the ratio. Palo Alto currently houses about 3.5% of Santa Clara County's population but contains about 9.1% of all the County's jobs. According to ABAG's ***Projections 2000***, Palo Alto was expected to house 44,300 employed residents in its Sphere of Influence (SOI) which includes Stanford University which is outside the city limits of Palo Alto. Total jobs in the SOI were estimated at 106,690 by the year 2000. These two figures indicate that Palo Alto was expected to have a job/housing ratio of 2.4 jobs to every employed resident by the year 2000. This, in turn, means that Palo Alto must import most of its workers to meet the needs of business and industry and indicates that there is probably a large unmet need for worker housing in the City. Since many of the Palo Alto's workers can not live in the City, the situation creates negative impacts such as long commutes for workers both inside and outside the region, substantially increased traffic congestion during peak commute periods, and increased air

pollution and energy consumption. The production of additional housing is a means for avoiding these situations.

Households with Special Needs

There are certain households within a community that typically have special housing needs. In Palo Alto, those households which have been identified as having special housing needs include:

1. Elderly Households,
2. Single Parent Households,
3. Disabled Households,
4. Overcrowded Households, and
5. Homeless Households.

In addition to the special needs households listed above which exist in Palo Alto, State housing element law requrires the City to investigate and describe the needs of farmworker households which do not exist in Palo Alto.

Information about each of these households is described in more detail in the paragraphs that follow. A general description of each of these household types is provided as well as a summary of the current resources available and a summary of their more significant housing needs.

1. Elderly Households

a) Description of Elderly Households in Palo Alto

The number of elderly persons in the City of Palo Alto has increased over the last three decades. In 1970, elderly (persons age 65 years and older) comprised 10% of the population but, by 2000, that percentage had increased to 15.6% of the total population. The total number of elderly persons residing in Palo Alto in 2000 was 9,140 persons an increase of 5.8% since 1990, which is slightly greater than Palo Alto's overall population increase of 5%. With longer life spans and age expectancies, it is anticipated that the proportion of elderly in Palo Alto's population will continue to increase in future years, particularly given the substantial increase in the City's middle age population over the last decade.

The 2000 Census data indicate that approximately 96% of the people who are 65 years or older in Palo Alto lived in household situations and the remaining 4% were living in group quarters or were institutionalized. There were a total of 6,349 households in Palo Alto that contained individuals 65 years or older. These households represent 25.5% of all Palo Alto households in 2000. Approximately 36% of persons 65 years old or older were in non-family households and 64% were in family households. In 2000, approximately 65% of all elderly non-family household were single females living alone. These female-head of households living alone represented approximately 22% of all elderly Palo Alto residents in

2000. There were 2,591 65-year old householders living alone in 1990. This number increased to 2,736 in 2000, an increase of 5.6%.

Approximately 5% of all elderly (450 persons total) had incomes below the poverty level in 1999. The majority of those persons (254) were over the age of 75 years old. While there was a low percentage of elderly persons living below the poverty level, it is important to note that many elderly households in Palo Alto were still living on limited incomes. For example, the 2000 U.S. Census data also indicates that approximately 54% of all elderly households had incomes that were at the low- or very low-income level. (See page 12 of this document for figures utilizing the HUD definition of income level to the Census 2000 Santa Clara County Household Median Income) There were approximately 2,382 elderly households that had incomes that could be classified as very low-income and another 841 households that were low-income.

The majority of Palo Alto elderly households are homeowners. Approximately 70% of all elderly households live in owner-occupied housing units;16% of elderly households living in owner occupied housing units were paying more than 30% of their income for housing in 2000. The remaining 30 % of all elderly households are renters and approximately 65% of all elderly household renters were paying more than 30% of their income for housing in 2000.

Year 2000 Census data confirms that the 1990 income and housing cost trends have continued for the elderly. The substantial increase in housing costs over the last few years, the increase in the elderly population and the percentage of elderly living on fixed incomes has resulted in more elderly households currently overpaying for housing.

b) Resources Available to Elderly Households

Listed on the next page (Illustration #7) are existing housing developments in the City of Palo Alto that are specifically designed for elderly households.

In regard to supportive living facilities for elderly, there are nursing care facilities as well as non-profit and for-profit residential care facilities in the City of Palo Alto. Lytton III provides skilled nursing care for approximately 145 elderly persons. Lytton III is part of the Lytton Gardens complex (Lytton I, II, III and IV [Lytton Courtyard]) which is the only development in Palo Alto that provides a full range of living options for lower income elderly from independent living to assisted living to skilled nursing care.

Illustration #7: Independent Living Facilities for Elderly
City of Palo Alto, 2000

Development	Total Units	Senior Units	Income Level Served
Independent Living (No Meals or Other Services)			
1 Palo Alto Gardens	156 units	128 units	Very Low-income only
2 Sheridan Apartments	57 units	57 units	Low-income
3 Terman Apartments	92 units	24 units	Very Low-income only
4 Webster Wood	68 units	4 units	Low-Income
5 Arastradero Park	66 units	13 units	Low-income
6 Colorado Park	60 units	8 units	Low-Income
Independent Living (Some Meals Provided)			
7 Stevenson House	128 units	128 units	Lower-income only
8 Lytton I and 11	268 units	268 units	Lower-income only
9 Lytton Courtyard	51 units	51 units	Lower-income only
TOTAL	**946 units**	**681 units**	

Source: City of Palo Alto, "Consolidated Plan July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2005", Pg. 25

Listed below are the residential care facilities for elderly in Palo Alto.

Illustration #8: Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly, City of Palo Alto, 2000

Name of Facility	Persons Served	Type of Facility
Casa Olga	103	Intermediate Nursing Care
Channing House	21	Nursing Facility
Channing House	285	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
Lytton Gardens Community Care	55	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
Lytton Gardens	145	Nursing Facility
Webster House	74	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
Palo Alto Nursing Center	66	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
Palo Alto Commons	150	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
Pleasant Manor	6	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
Sandy Oak Place	6	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
The Birches Residential Care	6	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
May Care	6	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
Sevely Manor Guest Home	6	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)
Sweet Little Home	6	Residential Care Facility (Asst. Living)

Source: City of Palo Alto, "Consolidated Plan July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2005", Pg. 26

c) Housing Needs of Elderly Households

The 2000 U.S. Census data indicated that approximately 65% of all elderly renter households were paying more than 30% of their income for housing. 2000 Census confirms that the number of elderly renter households overpaying for housing has increased given the increase in both the number of elderly households and the increase in housing costs since 1990. Therefore, providing affordable housing for the elderly is one of the more significant housing needs of this household category.

In addition, the federally required "Consolidated Plan July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2005", which is prepared by and for the City of Palo Alto, has estimated an unmet need for additional supportive housing facilities for elderly and frail elderly households in Palo Alto. The Plan has identified a need for an additional 260 units of assisted living facilities and additional 235 units provided with skilled nursing care or 24 hour care facilities.

2. Single Parent Households

a) Description of Single Parent Households in Palo Alto

There were a total of 25,216 households in Palo Alto according to the 2000 Census and, of these households, approximately 14,593 were "family" households. Single parent households represented 8.2% of all family households in 2000 an increase over the 7% proportion in 1990. There were 1,201 single parent households in 2000. 293 single parent households were headed by a male parent and 908 had a female-head of household. Single parent household as used in this document is defined as a family household with one or more children under the age of 18 years and headed by either a female or male head of household with no spouse present.

Lower household income is one of the more significant factors affecting single parent households. For example, married couple families in Palo Alto reported a mean family income of $101,537 for 1990 census purposes. Single parent family households, however, were significantly lower for the same data collection period. Male single parent households had annual family incomes of approximately $49,193. Annual mean household income for female single parents in Palo Alto was $36,651 or slightly over one-third that of a married couple family. Limited household income levels affect the ability of these households to locate affordable housing and, consequently, this is one of the more significant housing problems of this household category. Year 2000 Census data is not yet available to confirm these same proportional income differences between married couple and single parent households but it is probable that such differences continue since a substantial proportion of married couple households have two wage earners while single parent households, by definition, only have one.

b) Resources Available to Single Parent Households

In past years, the City provided financial assistance to a non-profit agency, "Innovative Housing, Inc.," to administer a shared housing program. Typically the households participating in the program were single parent households with 40% male parents and 60% female parents. In November 1996, Innovative Housing ceased operations due to a lack of funding to cover their operations in the Bay Area. Other agencies are being sought to provide this service.

c) Housing Needs of Single Parent Households

Affordable housing is one of the more significant needs of single parent households. Many times, their limited household incomes constrain the ability of single parent households to

"afford" housing units. Consequently, these households may have to pay more than they can afford for housing for themselves and their children. Or, they may have to rent a housing unit that is too small for their needs because it is the only type of housing they can afford. Other housing related needs that affect single parent households include assistance with security deposits, locating housing that is close to jobs, availability of child care services and proximity to transit services. Clearly the need for more affordable housing for single parent households has grown since the number of these households increased by about 73% over the last decade.

Without affordable housing and supportive services, many single parent households are at a higher risk of becoming homeless. Single parent families are fastest growing segment of the homeless population. According to the "1993 Santa Clara County Children's Report Card", 52% of homeless families in the County were headed by single parents.

3. Disabled Households

a) Description of Disabled Households in Palo Alto

Disabled households include households who have family members that have physical disabilities or mental illness or disability. The 2000 Census provides disability data by age and type of disability but not by household. According to the 2000 U.S. Census data, 2,426 persons had a disability that affected their ability to work. Information is not available about the type of household they live in, their income level or how their disability affects their housing needs. Generally, it can be assumed that persons with disabilities have lower incomes especially if their disability affects their ability to work. It is possible, of course, that some individuals have both a physical and mental disability but census data does not provide that level of specificity. In addition to employment disability, the Census tallies sensory, physical, mental, self care, and go-outside home disabilities by age groups. It is also possible that some individuals meet more than one category.

b) Resources Available to Disabled Households

Palo Alto has a few subsidized housing units specifically designed for persons with physical disabilities. Title 24 in the State of California relating to handicap accessibility and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) have resulted in an increase in these opportunities. Subsidized projects that have units specifically designed and adapted for persons with physical disabilities include California Park Apartments (1 unit), the Barker Hotel (5 units), and 330 Emerson Street (1 unit). Other projects, such as Lytton Courtyard, include units that can readily be adapted for persons with physical disabilities. The Alma Place SRO has 101 handicap adaptable units and 6 fully accessible units.
Page Mill Court housing for the developmentally disabled has 16 of 24 units fully accessible and 8 units adaptable. A few older projects have had units adapted within the limitations of their existing construction including Webster Woods, Terman Park and Sheridan Apartments.

Alliance for Community Care, Inc. provides treatment, support and rehabilitation counseling services for persons who have been affected by serious psychiatric disabilities. Their La Selva facility serves 12 adults and their Middlefield Road House serves six. Although their programs and administrative offices are based in San Jose, there is a service and treatment office in Palo Alto. They operate a licensed group home in Palo Alto, as well as an independent shared living house. Adolescent Counseling Services, Inc. operates a residential program for teenage youth with severe behavioral or emotional problems. Their Caravan House serves up to six young people between the ages of 12 and 17. The Veterans Workshop operates two group homes for veterans with disabilities serving a total of about 11 adults.

The City of Palo Alto provided funds to help acquire and rehabilitate two facilities for the disabled A 6-unit apartment structure in Sunnyvale (1215 Cortez Drive) serves adults with developmental disabilities and a 5-unit facility on Pettis Avenue in Mountain View provides housing for developmentally disabled females.

c) Housing Needs of Disabled Households

Individuals with physical disabilities are in need of housing units that have been modified to improve accessibility. Examples of modifications that are helpful include widened doorways and hallways, bathroom and kitchen modifications (lowered counter heights, accessible tubs/ showers and toilets, etc.) entry and exit ramps, modified smoke detectors and alarm systems for individuals with visual or hearing impairments, and other improvements.

A priority need for households with disabilities is housing near transit and jobs. Persons with physical disabilities may need housing that is connected to the provision of individualized services including training, counseling, information and referral services, and rent subsidy services that allow the physically disabled to live in the community. For individuals with a disability that affects their ability to work or who live on a fixed income, affordable housing is a high priority. Agencies that provide supportive services to the disabled population have been discouraged by the high cost of rental housing in Palo Alto. In fact, the City has continued to provide funding to several agencies to help acquire housing units in nearby communities because of the lack of affordable housing units in Palo Alto.

4. Overcrowded Households

a) Description of Overcrowded Households in Palo Alto

An overcrowded household is one in which there is more than one person per room in the living structure (usually "room" is defined as any room in the structure except for kitchen or bathrooms). On a statewide basis, it was estimated in 1989 that 7% of all California households lived in overcrowded housing. (Source: California Statewide Housing Plan Update, 1990, State of California Dept. of Housing and Community Development). The Census 2000 Data indicates that approximately 15% of all California households lived in overcrowded housing.

According to the 1990 U.S. Census approximately 655 units or 2.7% of Palo Alto's total occupied housing units were overovercrowded with more than one person per room. 2000 U.S. Census indicates that approximately 4% or 1,057 housing units of the City's total occupied housing units were overcrowded with more than one person per room. Of these 1,057 units, 516 were "severely overcrowded" with more than 1.51 persons per room. The majority (425 units) of these severely overcrowded units were occupied by renter households. In fact, renter households have a higher incidence of overcrowding than owner households. Approximately 76% of the total 1,057 overcrowded units are occupied by renter households. In regard to age of the residential structure, overcrowded households are found in both older as well as newer housing units in the City. While 89% of the overcrowded households live in units that were built since 1940, this proportion reflects the fact that 84% of the units in the City were built since 1940. Therefore, the age of the housing units is not statistically significant in regard to overcrowded households in Palo Alto

Overcrowding is not as serious a housing problem in Palo Alto as it is in Santa Clara County as a whole or as it is in nearby cities such as Mountain View and San Jose. For comparison, approximately 23% of all rental units in Santa Clara County (52,993 overcrowded rental/227,227 rental units), 17% of all rental units in Mountain View (3,039 overcrowded rental/18,250 rental units), and 29% (30,939 overcrowded rental/105,592 rental units) of all rental units in San Jose are considered overcrowded.

Households do not typically choose to be overcrowded but end up in that situation because they cannot afford a housing unit that is appropriate in size to their needs. Traditionally, large households (households of 5 or more persons) have difficulty in securing and/or affording housing units of 3 or more bedrooms partially because of an insufficient supply of 3+ bedroom units. Large renter families, in particular, have difficulty in finding rental housing stock that is appropriate for their household size and also affordable. The 2000 data indicate that there were 1,576 households in Palo Alto that had 5 or more persons. Approximately 27% of these households or 422 households total were renter households. Moreover, small households in Palo Alto have difficulty in finding appropriate size rental housing due to the high cost of housing. 2000 Census data confirms that the combination of factors including increase in household size, an increase in the number of households with children, and the substantial increases in housing costs in the 1990s may have led to a greater overcrowding problem than it was in 1990.

b) Resources Available to Overcrowded Households

The 2000 U.S. Census data indicate that there were 1,651 rental units that had 3 or more bedrooms in the City of Palo Alto. These 1,651 units represent 15.1% of all rental units in the City at that time. The same data source reported that there were 1,576 large households (households of 5 or more persons) and that 422 of these households were renter households. Therefore the raw statistics would indicate that there appear to be sufficient existing units that are appropriate in size for large households. However the cost to rent these units may be prohibitive for some households. In 1990, 78% of these 3+ bedroom rental units identified

above had monthly gross rents in excess of $1,800 per month. By March 2001, the average rent for a 3-bedroom apartment increased to $2,992 per month (Source: REAL FACTS). This situation makes it extremely difficult for lower income families to find adequate housing.

There are units in some of the assisted housing developments in the City that are both large in size and affordable. As an example, the Arastradero Park development includes fourteen 3-bedroom units and four 4-bedroom units. However, given the rapid rise in the rents of large apartments, more family sized apartments are needed to help keep rental costs down as well as reduce overcrowding.

c) Housing Needs of Overcrowded Households

The most obvious need, of course, for large and overcrowded households is the need for housing units that are adequately sized for the family. Typically there is a need for 3, 4 and 5-bedroom housing units for households that are overcrowded due to family size. Because these types of units are usually expensive to rent or buy, overcrowded households are in need of affordable and large housing units. And, as noted above, small households in Palo Alto are also overcrowded because of the high cost of housing. Therefore, affordable housing, primarily affordable rental housing, is a significant need for overcrowded households and, in fact, this need is becoming more critical given the near doubling of rents for all units between 1996 and 2001.

5. Homeless Households

a) Description of Homeless Households in Palo Alto

It is very difficult to develop a precise and realistic description of homeless households in a community. This is due to several reasons but one of the more significant is the lack of good data on the number and type of homeless households. The 1990 U.S. Census attempted to identify homeless households during their "S-Night" count on March 20-21, 1990. During the evening hours of March 20 and the early morning hours of March 21, census takers attempted to count the number of persons in emergency shelters and persons visible in street locations. However, even the Census Bureau cautions users of this data that the data is not considered to be complete and that there were probably many more homeless persons than reported in this survey. Indeed, in Palo Alto, the 1990 U.S. Census data reported that there were only 13 persons in shelters and 11 persons visible in street locations. It is generally acknowledged by homeless service providers that these numbers significantly underestimate the actual count of homeless persons in Palo Alto.

In 1995, the cities of San Jose, Santa Clara, Palo Alto, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and Gilroy, and the County of Santa Clara, jointly funded and participated in a survey of homeless individuals and families in Santa Clara County. The survey consisted of a questionnaire that was administered to a sample of the homeless population in the County. Unlike a census, which counts the entire population in a group, a sample survey reaches only a subset of the total population. The survey process consisted of on-site interviews with

individuals at various public street locations throughout the County and on-site interviews with individuals at all of the emergency shelters, youth outreach centers, and transitional housing facilities. The survey interviewed a total of 1,149 homeless individuals and resulted in the following information:

- Approximately 1,700 homeless persons were estimated to be without shelter at the time the survey was taken.
- The total "sheltered" at the time of the survey was estimated at 2,024 resulting in a total homeless count of 3,724.
- The number of children who are homeless comprised 19% of the total sample count and 74% of these children were under the age of twelve.
- The number of working homeless doubled from 12% identified in a 1989 report to 24% in the 1995 report.
- Mental illness and substance abuse are problems that continue to be a significant factor for the County's homeless population.
- The length of time in homelessness appears to be increasing. Over 41% of the respondents reported being homeless for more than one year – an increase of 40% over the 1989 survey of the homeless.
- The survey indicates the ethnic background of the participants as: 26% White, 57% African-American, 13% Hispanic, and 4% other.

The "1995 Overview of Homelessness in Santa Clara County" estimated that, based on turnover rates in shelters and adding in the approximately 8,800 AFDC single head of household with children who requested homeless assistance for fiscal year 1994-95, there probably were a total of 16,300 persons in the County who experienced a period of homelessness for that year, from less to a month to more than a year.

The Palo Alto sample represented about 4.2 percent of the total survey population or approximately 48 people. This would translate into about 72 people if this percentage were applied to the 1,700 homeless people estimated to be in the County in 1995. However, there is no accepted method for allocating the estimates of the number of homeless to individual cities. Due to the transitory nature of homelessness, it cannot be described with any meaning except on a countywide basis. From the perspective of a city like Palo Alto, which is located on the border between two counties, homelessness should be studied from a sub-regional perspective.

Another indicator regarding homelessness comes from the Santa Clara County Housing Authority's waiting list information. When the waiting list was open in 1999, respondents were asked whether or not they were homeless. The number of homeless households from Palo Alto on this waiting list was 54. Assuming an average household size of 2.3 persons,

these 54 households represent about 124 people who were homeless and who, at one time, lived in Palo Alto. It is likely that the increase in housing costs during the 1990s is increasing the risk of homelessness for lower income households in Palo Alto and, as indicated earlier, many of the households at-risk of becoming homeless may be female headed, single parent households or large family households that cannot find adequate, affordable shelter.

b) Resources Available to Homeless Households

The City of Palo Alto participates in the Santa Clara County Collaborative on Housing and Homeless Issues, which represents homeless shelters, service providers, advocates, non-profit housing developers and local jurisdictions. The City and the Collaborative follow a "Continuum of Care" approach in addressing the needs of homeless persons. The continuum consists of the following steps in providing homeless resources:

- **Prevention Services**
- **Emergency Shelter**
- **Transitional and Permanent Affordable Housing**

Listed below is a description of the resources available to Palo Alto households according to the "Continuum of Care" approach.

i) Prevention Services:
The goal of this first level of resources is to prevent households from becoming homeless. Households who are "at risk" for becoming homeless are those who are lower income and who have a difficuit time paying for their existing housing. Traditionally, these include households who "overpay" for housing (paying more than 30% of their income for housing) as well as households who experience job termination or reduction or marital separations. Part of the prevention resources are the provision of emergency food and clothing funds as well as emergency rent funds and rental move-in assistance.

In Palo Alto, the Urban Ministry of Palo Alto is the primary provider of services to homeless persons. The Urban Ministry, at their morning drop-in center, coordinates the provision of supportive services, counseling, job labor referral, transportation vouchers, shower passes, mental health services and maintains a message and mails system. On a daily basis, the drop-in center is visited by about 120 persons. Since the drop-in center is located a short walk from the San Mateo County line and adjacent to a major inter-County transit terminal, it is reasonable to assume that some of their clients have connections to other communities and do not solely represent Palo Alto households. The Urban Ministry also coordinates the provision of groceries for needy individuals through the Food Closet located at All Saints Episcopal Church in downtown Palo Alto. The Food Closet serves an average of 90 persons daily. Urban ministries also coordinates a daily hot meal program at various church locations.

The Shelter Plus Care Program, administered by the County Office of Homelessness, provides Section 8 rental subsidies to eligible, case-managed homeless persons with a disability. The program has been successfully implemented in both the Barker Hotel (a rehabilitated 26 unit single room occupancy hotel) and Alma Place (a newly constructed 107 unit single room occupancy residency hotel). Thirteen previously homeless persons are currently housed as a result of the program.

In addition to the case-management provided under the Shelter Plus Care Program, the Palo Alto Housing Corporation provides additional, extensive counseling and supportive services to its residents at the Barker Hotel, the majority of whom were previously homeless, or at-risk of becoming homeless. The program, funded with Palo Alto CDBG funds, has significantly reduced the turnover rate at the Barker Hotel, keeping at-risk persons in their homes.

The American Red Cross distributes emergency assistance funds to families and individuals who are threatened with homelessness. The Red Cross is the local distributor of County Emergency Assistance Network Funds.

ii) Emergency Shelters

The Urban Ministry of Palo Alto operates the "Hotel de Zink" shelter out of twelve churches, using a different church each month of the year. A maximum of 15 adults each night can be provided with emergency shelter. Meals are also provided as part of the service.

Within the County of Santa Clara, there are approximately 662 emergency year round shelter beds and 590 seasonal (winter months) beds. None of these facilities are located in the City of Palo Alto. The City of Palo Alto, in conjunction with other CDBG entitlement jurisdictions, financed the development of Emergency Housing Consortium's Homeless Reception Center in San Jose. The Reception Center operates 150 year-round beds (250 beds during the winter months) and provides intake and assessment services to its clients to ensure that they receive the appropriate level of care. Additionally, Palo Alto assisted in the establishment of the 60-bed Clara-Mateo Shelter, located at the Veterans Administration hospital in Menlo Park. The shelter contains six family housing rooms and six transitional housing rooms. Although the shelter is open to all eligible clients, about two-thirds of the population served is veterans.

The largest shelter for youth in San Jose is the Santa Clara County Children's Shelter, providing emergency shelter for wards of the court (usually victims of abuse or neglect) from newborn to 18 years of age. The facility has a 90-bed capacity and is consistently full. The New County Children's Shelter (completed in 1995) has a capacity of 132 beds and is also located in San Jose. Other shelters for youth include Casa SAY in Mountain View, Emergency Housing Consortium's Youth Outreach Program, and the Bill Wilson Center in Santa Clara.

iii) Transitional Affordable Housing

There are currently no transitional housing shelters in the City of Palo Alto but there are transitional shelters in nearby communities. Listed on the following page are five transitional shelters that could serve Palo Alto households as well as households in the community in which they are located.

Illustration #9: Transitional Housing Shelters (in Nearby Areas)

Name	Operator	Capacity (No. of Beds)	Clientele	Other Services
Haven Family House, Menlo Park	Shelter Network	23	Families	Yes, at site
Redwood Family House, Redwood City	Shelter Network	40	Families	Yes, at site
Reception Center, San Jose	Emergency Housing Consortium	250	Families	Yes, at site
Illinois St. House East Palo Alto	Shelter Network	8	Single Parents	Yes
Clara-Mateo Shelter, Menlo Park	Clara Mateo Alliance	6 (rooms)	Families, Individuals	Yes

Source: City of Palo Alto, "Consolidated Plan, 1995-2000", Pg. 23; "Consolidated Plan: July 1, 2000 to June 30, 2005, pg. 41.

There is only one facility in the City of Palo Alto (see Illustration #10) that provides a managed shared housing opportunity. This facility is oriented to families with children and is typically occupied by single parent households.

Illustration #10: Supportive Shared Housing Facilities, City of Palo Alto

Name	Operator	Capacity	Clientele
Pine St. House	Palo Alto Housing Corporation	3 Households	Small families or individuals

Source: City of Palo Alto

c) Housing Needs of Homeless Households

One of the major causes of homelessness is the lack of affordable housing. Most homeless households are on limited or fixed incomes and cannot afford a housing unit in California's housing market and, especially, in the Bay Area housing market. Permanent affordable housing is the single most important housing need for homeless households. In the meantime, new, small emergency homeless shelters in Palo Alto would be useful in addressing the immediate shelter needs of homeless persons who reside, or who once resided, in Palo Alto, particularly homeless families.

6. Farmworker Households

a) Description of Farmworker Households in Palo Alto

State law requires every jurisdiction in California to assess the need for farmworker housing. In Palo Alto's case, there is no significant need for farmworker housing since there is no significant farmworker or mining population in the City. Although the ABAG's ***Projections 2000*** estimated that there would be about 430 jobs in the Agriculture and Mining sector within Palo Alto's Sphere of Influence in the year 2000, the 2000 Census Data indicates that there are no farmworker households in Palo Alto nor are there any mining operations. ABAG's job assignment is probably the result of the distribution of jobs based on a regional model that does not necessarily reflect the specific employment circumstances of individual communities. There are no large agricultural areas in Palo Alto that are devoted to field crops, orchards or other agricultural uses that would require farmworker labor nor are there any active mining uses that would typically require mining labor; however, there may be Agriculture and Mining sector jobs in Palo Alto related to aspects of this sector not associated with field crops or orchard work or extractive mining work. Palo Alto is nearly built out and highly urbanized. Most large open space areas are located within the baylands or hillsides of Palo Alto and its Sphere of Influence and are set aside for park use, conservation purposes, or open space preserves. Finally, no housing advocate or low-income housing provider in Palo Alto has indicated there is an unmet need in the City for farmworker or mineworker housing.

b) Resources Available for Farmworker Households

Since there appears to be no significant number of farmworkers in Palo Alto, no special housing resources have been identified or set aside for farmworkers. Housing for farmworkers, to the extent that there are any, would be provided through the City's policies and programs that address the needs of lower income households in general.

c) Housing Needs of Farmworker Households

There is no evidence that there is significant need for farmworker housing in Palo Alto.

Households Overpaying for Housing

Census data from 2000 indicates that over 30% of all households in Palo Alto were "cost burdened" or overpayed for housing in 2000 (i.e., paid more than 30% of household income for rent). This information is consistent with the 1990 Census Data. As shown on the chart below, renters were more likely to overpay for housing than home owners.

Illustration 11: Households Paying More than 30% of Household Income for Housing

Renters		Owners		All Households	
Number Overpaying	% of Renter Households	Number Overpaying	% of Owner Households	Number Overpaying	% of All Households
4,262	40.6%	2,752	21.92%	7,014	30.4%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Large proportions of the City's low and moderate income households of all types were more likely to overpay for housing (see illustration below), particularly very low- and low-income renter households. Using data generated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the preparation of the City's 1993-1994 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), Palo Alto determined that about 59% of all households earning 95% of City's Median Family Income (MFI) overpaid for housing in 1990. Seventy-four percent of the renters and 39% of the owners earning 95% or less of MFI overpaid for housing. In 1990, Median Family Income (MFI) for Palo Alto was approximately $68,790. For the purposes of the City's CHAS overypayment analysis, three income categories were used: Very Low-Income (0-50% of MFI or $0 – $34,395), Low-Income (51-80% of MFI or $34,396 - $55,032), and Moderate-Income (81-95% of MFI or $55,033 - $65,350). This is generally the group of households least able to devote 30% or more of their income to housing without significantly affecting other aspects of family health and quality of life. Further, since lower income rental households are more likely to pay much higher rents proportionally than other households, the City has focused most of its affordable housing efforts towards increasing the supply of affordable rental housing.

Illustration 12: Households Earning 95% or Less of Median Family Income (MFI) Paying More than 30% of Household Income for Housing

Household Income	Renters		Owners		All Households	
	Number	% of Renters	Number	% of Owners	Number	% of Households
Very Low Income (0-50% of MFI)	1,878	78%	599	44%	2,477	66%
Low Income (51-80% of MFI)	689	75%	174	26%	863	54%
Moderate Income (81-95% of MFI)	462	61%	132	23%	594	45%
Total	**3,029**	**74%**	**905**	**39%**	**3,934**	**59%**

Source: 1993-1994 Palo Alto Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy

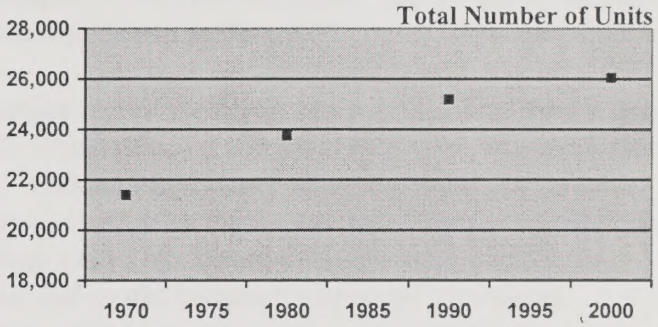
Chapter 3: Housing Stock

Inventory of Housing Units

According to the 2000 Census, there were 26,155 residential units in Palo Alto. This was an increase of 967 units from 1990 when there were a total of 25,188 units in the City.

Illustration #13: Total Number of Housing Units, City of Palo Alto 1970-2000

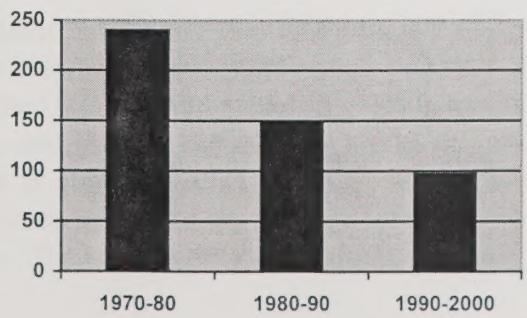
	Total # of Units
1970	21,338
1980	23,747
1990	25,188
2000	26,155



Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990; 2000

In evaluating the rate of housing production from an historical perspective, there has been a significant decrease in the rate of housing produced in the City of Palo Alto over the last three decades. During the decade from 1970-80, the City's housing stock increased by 2,409 units or approximately 240 units per year. From 1980-90 this rate decreased to an average of 144 new units per year or a 10 year total of 1,441 new units added to the housing stock. The 1990-2000 data identified above reflects an even lower rate of housing unit production dropping to an average of 97 units per year.

Illustration #14: Rate of Annual Housing Production, 1970-2000
Annual Rate



There are several reasons for the decrease in housing unit production rates. First, the City of Palo Alto is essentially "built out". Less than 0.5% of the City's developable land area is vacant. The opportunity to annex additional land to the City is limited because the City is surrounded on the east and west by the Cities of Mountain View, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Los Altos. The San Francisco Bay frames the northeast boundary while Stanford University borders the southwest boundary. Stanford University is located in the unincorporated area of the County of Santa Clara but also owns parcels of land in the City. In fact, one of the more significant housing projects under construction during the preparation of this Housing Element is the "Stanford West" development on Stanford property located within the City adjacent to Sand Hill Road. This development will generate 628 rental units and a senior housing complex with over 400 units. This is one of the last opportunities for large scale residential development in Palo Alto.

Besides the dearth of available land, another reason for the decrease in housing production was the recession during the early 1990s which affected the value of the housing market and made it less attractive to build housing. That situation changed during the mid- and late-1990s when the Silicon Valley economy boomed with the expansion of the Internet and the significant growth in high technology businesses. As the number of workers and their incomes rose, housing demand increased and so did housing production. However, production could not keep pace with demand thus driving up the cost of housing even more rapidly than the growth of the economy. Land costs increased very rapidly particularly in Palo Alto given the limited supply of available residential land which increased financing costs. These factors combined with increased materials and construction costs made it much more difficult to produce housing, especially affordable housing. And, although the local economy has been slowing since the first half of the year 2000, it is not anticipated that this economic slowdown will substantially decrease the cost of producing new housing.

The availability of land and economic issues will continue to be important variables in determining the amount and the rate of new housing produced in the City. Additional information on land availability and estimates of new housing to be produced during the time frame of this Housing Element can be found in Chapter 5 ("Future Housing Needs") and Chapter 6 ("Housing Constraints").

Housing Units by Type and Tenure

The majority of housing units in Palo Alto are single family units. Approximately 63% of the total housing stock in 2000 was single family units with 94% of those single family units being single family detached units and the remainder single family attached units (e.g. condominium and townhouse units). Multi-family units in structures of 2-4 units represented 6.6% of the housing stock in 2000 and approximately 30% of the housing stock consisted of multifamily units in structures of 5 and more units. Mobile homes represented less than 1% of the total housing stock. The illustration below reflects the 2000 mix of housing types in the City.

Illustration #15: Housing Stock by Type, City of Palo Alto, 2000

Single Family	16,365
2-4 Units	1,728
5+ Units	7,897
Other *(includes 109 mobile homes)*	165
TOTAL	**26,155**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Year 2000 Census information confirms that the distribution of housing types changed only slightly with single family units continuing to make up the majority of Palo Alto's housing stock but at somewhat less than the current 64% level in 1990. This is due to the increasing construction of multiple family housing in Palo Alto. For example, between 1996 and 2000 the City built about 335 dwelling units and 212 of these units, or over 63%, were multiple family units.

In 2000, approximately 56.8% of the 25,327 occupied units in the City are owner-occupied. Homeowners live in 14,398 of the City's occupied units and the remaining 10,929 are occupied by renter households. The percentage of owner-occupied units has been slowly but steadily increasing. In 1970, 54% of the City's units were owner-occupied and by 1980 that percentage had increased to 55%. The 1990 owner-occupied percentage was 57% decreasing only slightly to 56.8% in 2000 indicating a leveling off of this trend.

It is interesting to note that the percentage of owner-occupied and renter-occupied units in the City's housing stock is fairly similar to the proportion of owner and renter units in Santa Clara County as a whole. The County's housing stock consisted of 40.2% renter-occupied and 59.8% owner-occupied units in 2000.

In 2000, most of the owner-occupied units in the City were three bedrooms and larger in size. Approximately 78.6% of all owner-occupied units were three bedrooms or larger. The average number of bedrooms in an owner-occupied unit was 3.15 bedrooms while the average bedroom size of a renter-occupied unit was 1.64 bedrooms per unit. Year 2000 Census data indicates that the average number of bedrooms in an owner-occupied unit was 3.16 while the average number of bedrooms in a renter occupied unit was 1.52 It was anticipated that owner-occupied units may be slightly larger in 2000 given the increasing size of single family detached dwellings over the last decade while renter-occupied units in 2000 indicated a slight decrease in the average number of bedrooms from 1990.

Vacancy Rates

Vacancy rates have traditionally been used as a gauge to measure the health of a community's housing market. Low vacancy rates (typically defined as anything less than 3% for homeowner units and 5% or less for renter units) indicate a tight housing market with few vacant units and increasing demand for those vacant units which then drive up rental costs.

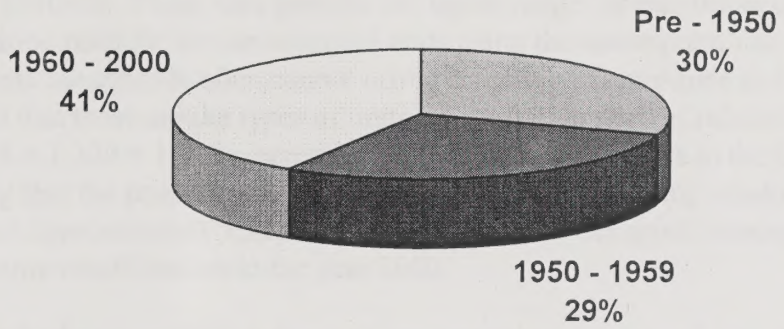
Data from the 2000 U.S. Census indicate that a total of 828 units were vacant out of a total housing stock of 26,155 units. This reflects an overall vacancy rate of 3.17%. However, in looking at this data more closely only 323 of the 828 units were available for sale or rent. The remaining 505 units were vacant but were being used for seasonal, recreational, or other uses. Therefore, the real vacancy rate when evaluating units available for rent or sale is actually 1.2%.

Of the 323 units available, it was calculated that 176 units were available for rent and 147 units were for sale. If the 176 available rental units is added to the occupied-rental housing stock in 2000 of 10,929 units, then the total number of rental units (occupied and vacant) in 2000 was 11,105 units. The 176 vacant units then represent 1.6% of the rental housing stock. By using the same method, the homeowner vacancy rate in 2000 was about 1% (147 vacant units + 14,398 owner occupied units = 14,545 units total). REAL FACTS estimated that occupancy rates for large apartment complexes (50 units or more; 1,943 units total) varied from a low of 98.3% (1.7% vacancy rate) in the middle quarter of 2000 to a high of 99.3% (0.7% vacancy rate) during the fourth quarter. However, during the first quarter of 2001, average occupancy rates decreased to 95.9% (4.1% vacancy rate) reflecting the slowdown in the economy.

Housing Age and Condition

Like many other California communities, Palo Alto experienced a huge spurt of growth in the decade after World War II. Approximately 29% the City's current housing stock was built in the decade between 1950-60. The 2000 U.S.Census data confirmed this by indicating that the median year in which a typical Palo Alto owner-occupied housing unit was constructed was 1954. In fact, the City's housing stock appears to be divided into three periods of construction or age. The 2000 U.S. Census data showed that roughly 30% of the units (7,720 units) were constructed prior to 1950, approximately 29% (7,587 units) were constructed between 1950-59 and approximately 41% (10,848 units) were built after 1959 through March 2000. Year 2000 Census information confirms that the age distribution has changed only slightly with a higher percentage of units in the post-1960 period due to the additional units added between 1990 and 2000 and lower percentages for the pre-1959 periods due to demolitions.

Illustration #16: Year Structure Built, City of Palo Alto, 2000



Source: 2000 U.S. Census

By looking at census data indicators only, Palo Alto's housing stock is not substantially at risk for having severely deteriorated units. The majority of the City's units were built after World War II and so there are limited numbers of very old housing units (50+ years) in the City. Further, the census data indicates that in 2000 only 84 of the City's 26,155 total units lacked complete plumbing facilities.

While a formal "windshield" survey has not been conducted in Palo Alto in recent years, there have been periodic and extensive drive-throughs of the neighborhoods in Palo Alto by both staff and consultants. Because of the high market value and income levels in many Palo Alto neighborhoods, the units generally appear to be in good condition and there appear to be few, if any, pockets of deteriorating units. The City's 1988-91 "Housing Assistance Plan" estimated that only 3% of the City's owner occupied housing stock is substandard. The 3% figure was based on information from the City's Housing Improvement Program, which has now been discontinued, and is the most accurate information available on substandard housing. City staff observations indicate minimal change in the amount of substandard housing since 1991. City staff has also observed that, in Palo Alto there does not appear to be a correlation between the age of a structure and deterioration. Further, the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) reports that Santa Clara County's housing stock is in significantly better condition than other areas of the State.

Assuming that the proportion (3%) of owner-occupied units estimated to be substandard remains the same, only about 432 of the 14,398 owner-occupied units in Palo Alto could be considered substandard. This actual number of substandard homes is probably less, however, given the high real estate values of the City and the high level of investments property owners are likely to spend to maintain these values.

2000 Census data analyzing household income categories in relation to year built of occupied housing units is not currently available but a review of the 1990 U.S. Census data indicates that only 4.5% (598 households total) of all owner occupants in Palo Alto are very low-and low-income and live in housing units built prior to 1940. Another 10% of owner occupants (1,320 households total) are very low- and low-income and live in units built between 1940-59. These data provide an "upper range" or maximum ceiling of rehabilitation need for owner occupied units using the assumption that very low and low-income households often cannot afford on-going maintenance and repair as their units "age" and that these are the types of units most often in need of rehabilitation. The 1,918 units (598 + 1,320 = 1,918) represent 7.6% of all housing units in the City in 1990. Assuming that the proportion of potential housing units needing rehabilitation remained the same, then approximately 1,980 of Palo Alto's owner-occupied housing units may have needed some rehabilitation in the year 2000.

One site which may contain a greater than average proportion of units needing rehabilitation or replacement is the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park. This 4+ acre development consists of both mobile home/trailers and studio rental units. The 2000 U.S. Census reported that there were 156 mobile homes/trailers in the City and it is estimated that 104 of these units are located at Buena Vista. The census data reported that in 2000 none of the 156 mobile homes/trailers were vacant. Many of the units at Buena Vista are older "trailer" units. Typically, these older trailers lack adequate insulation, roofing and foundation and may also have outdated plumbing and electrical systems. Additionally, accessibility (exterior doors and stairs, hallways) is also a concern especially for older and/or disabled occupants. During a recent (July 2001) drive-through of the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park, it appeared that many of the exterior conditions described above have remained the same.

The City's rental housing stock is "younger" than its total housing stock. Census 2000 data indicates that the median year that a renter-occupied unit was built is 1963 while the median for all occupied units is 1957. 75.44% of the renter-occupied units built on or after 1990 were in structures of 5 or more units. Assuming that very low- and low-income renters might be more likely to live in substandard units because of their limited income for housing costs, a review of income status and age of housing was conducted of the 1990 U.S. Census data. This review indicates that the majority (60%) of very low- and low-income tenants in Palo Alto occupied units built after 1960. Another 28% (987 households total) of very low- and low-income tenants were living in units built between 1940-59 while the remaining 13% (462 households total) of very low- and low-income renters lived in units built prior to 1940. Therefore, the census data indicates that most very low- and low-income tenants in Palo Alto live in "newer" units (units built after 1960) and these units are typically assumed to be in no serious threat of being substandard. There are 462 very low- and low-income tenants living in units over 50 years of age and these units are the most likely to be substandard and in need of rehabilitation. There are also 987 very low- and low-income tenants living in units built between 1940-59 and some of these units could also be in need of repair or rehabilitation. The 1,449 total units (462+987=1,449 units) represent 5.8% of all housing units in the City in 1990. Assuming the same proportion (5.8%) of rental units that are

possible, substandard for the year 2000, then approximately 1,463 housing units may have needed some rehabilitation in 2000.

While it does not appear that there is a serious problem with the condition of rental units, it should be noted that the City has been active in trying to maintain the condition of the existing rental housing stock. Using federal funds and bond authority, several rental housing developments in Palo Alto have been rehabilitated in recent years. In 1998-99, the City assisted the Palo Alto Housing Corporation in preserving and rehabilitating the 57 unit Sheridan Apartments and, in 1999-2000, assisted the Mid-Peninsula Housing coalition in preserving and rehabilitating the 156 unit Palo Alto Gardens. The City assisted with the acquisition and rehabilitation of the 66 unit Arastradero Park Apartments in 1995. With City assistance, the Palo Alto Housing Corporation rehabilitated the 10 unit Plum Tree Apartments in 1991 and the 26 unit Barker Hotel project in 1994. The City continues to monitor the maintenance and repair needs of the rental housing stock.

Cost and Affordability of Housing

Housing costs continue to be a concern for California communities, especially in the San Francisco Bay Area. Palo Alto is a very desirable community and, consequently, the cost of housing is especially high and has been rising rapidly. Census 2000 data indicates that the median value for specified owner-occupied housing for Santa Clara County was $446,400. It should be noted however, that according to the Silicon Valley Board of Realtors, the price of both single-family detached dwellings and condominiums/townhouses more than doubled between 1996 and 2000. Single-family detached home prices increased 105% from $490,000 to $1,006,600. Condominium and townhouse prices increased 107% from $264,000 to $546,600 (Source: Silicon Valley Board of Realtors, penwest.com).

Using the 2000 median prices of a single family detached home ($1,006,600) and a condominium or townhouse ($546,600) as examples, the household incomes necessary to purchase a median priced home in Palo Alto can be calculated. Assuming a standard 20% down payment and an 8% mortgage with a 30 year term, a household would need to have an annual income of approximately $275,000 to afford the median sales price of $1,006,600 for a single family detached home. The monthly payment for principal, interest, taxes and insurance is estimated to be over $6,800 per month and assuming that the household would pay no more than 30% of their income for housing costs. Using the same assumptions, the household income required to purchase the medium price condominium or townhome in Palo Alto would be approximately $163,000 per year. This assumes a monthly payment of over $4,000 per month for principal, interest, taxes, insurance and homeowner association dues. Using a family of four as the basis for comparison, a household would have to earn over three times the County's median income to purchase the median priced single-family home in Palo Alto. To purchase a median priced condominium or townhouse in Palo Alto, a four person household would need to have an income of nearly twice the median level.

The information in the above paragraph indicates that households either need a very high household income to afford the median priced housing units in Palo Alto in 2000 or else

would need to have a substantial amount of funds for a large down payment so that the monthly mortgage costs would be reduced. Low- and moderate-income households do not have the household incomes needed to afford these units and, typically, do not have access to large amounts of funds to use for down payments. Therefore, it is very difficult for low- and moderate-income households to afford home ownership in Palo Alto. In fact, unless publicly subsidized in some manner, home ownership in Palo Alto is available only to households with above moderate-incomes.

According to the 2000 Census data, the median gross rent in Palo Alto was $1,349 while the median gross rent for Santa Clara County was $1,185. However, in March 2001, based on a monthly survey of 13 apartment complexes representing a total of 1,943 units in Palo Alto, REAL FACTS reported that the average apartment unit was 856 square feet and rented for $2.93 per square foot or $2,512 per month. The average rent for a 1 bedroom/1 bath was $2,300; a 2 bedroom/2 bath average rent was $3,218/month; and, the 3 bedroom/ 2 bath was $2,992 per month.

Using 2000 median income figures for Santa Clara County, a household of 4 persons could have an income of no more than $43,500 per year to qualify as a very low-income household. By applying the formula that a household should spend no more than 30% of their income for housing, then the very low-income, 4-person household should spend no more than $1,087 per month for housing costs, including utilities.

Illustration #17: 2000 Income Limits/Housing Affordability County of Santa Clara, 4-Person Household

	Maximum Income Limit	Maximum Housing Cost (30% of Income)
Very Low		
0-50% of Median	$43,500	$1,087/month
*Low**		
51-66% of Median	$53,853	$1,346/month
Moderate		
80% of Median	$69,600	$1,740/month
100% of Median	$87,000	$2,175/month
120% of Median	$104,400	$2,610/month

** In areas with very high median incomes, HUD caps the low-income limit based on the national median income rather than the traditional 80% of County median income.*

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The chart on the previous page indicates household income levels and maximum "affordable" housing costs for a four person household. In comparing maximum affordable housing costs to the average 2000 apartment rent of $2,512 per month, it appears that the very low- and low-income households are completely priced out of the market. None of

those households can theoretically afford the average apartment rent. These households either have to find a much smaller unit (i.e. studio unit or 1 bedroom unit possibly) or pay more than 30% of their income for housing costs (which is the most likely scenario). In regard to home ownership, these income groups are also unable to compete for home ownership units since their household incomes are significantly below the median priced townhome/condominium or the median priced single family, detached home. Only those four-person moderate-income households earning at least $100,480 (115% of the County median income) appear to be able to afford typical rental rates in Palo Alto; however, home ownership is out of reach since that requires an income of at least $163,000 for a median priced condominium or townhouse.

In summary, home ownership in Palo Alto is expensive and available principally to households near the upper end of above moderate incomes. Without a public subsidy in some manner, the median priced home ownership units in the City require minimum household incomes of $163,00-$275,000 depending on unit type. Only the upper end of the households in the above moderate-income range can "afford" typical rental unit housing costs, but low- and very low-income households have a much more difficult time. Very low-income households, in particular, are much more challenged in finding a rental unit that is affordable and appropriately sized for their household. The recent slowing of the economy and increased vacancy rates may bring about a modest decline in rents and home prices, but not to the extent of substantially improving the affordability of housing in Palo Alto.

Chapter 4: Existing Affordable Housing

The City of Palo Alto has been very active in promoting and supporting the provision of affordable housing. This chapter of the Housing Element Technical Document describes the various housing programs and policies implemented in the City at the time this Element was prepared (early 2002). Also included in this chapter is an inventory of the existing affordable housing units in the City and a description of the various social service agencies that receive City funding and provide housing support services.

City Housing Programs and Policies

1. Below Market Rate (BMR) Program

One of the most significant housing programs adopted by the city is the "Below Market Rate" (BMR) Program. The BMR program was initiated in 1974 as a mechanism to increase the supply of housing affordable to individuals and families with low- to moderate-incomes. When first adopted, the BMR program applied to projects of 20 or more units. In 1976, this was lowered to projects of 10 or more units. In 1990, the threshold was further reduced to apply to projects of 3 or more units. With the adoption of the 1998-2010 Comprehensive Plan and its Housing Element, the threshold was placed at three units for for-sale housing and five units for rental housing. The raising of the threshold for rental projects was done in order to facilitate construction of small rental projects, where the BMR program has limited impact. Based on legal advice, the BMR threshold in the revised 1999-2006 Housing Element was modified to apply to projects of five units or more for both for-sale and rental projects.

The BMR program requires that, in for-sale projects of three or more units and rental projects of five or more units, at least 10% of the units be provided at housing costs that are affordable to low- and moderate-income households. Development on sites greater than 5 acres in size are required to include a 15% BMR component. The priority for the program is to include units spread throughout the community and in all projects. An alternative allows for the developer paying an "in-lieu" fee to the City rather than actually providing the units. These "in-lieu" fees are then deposited in the City's "Housing Development Fund." (See the following page for a further description of this fund.) Program H-31 of the 1998-2010 Comprehensive Plan recommended the adoption of a revised density bonus program that allows for the construction of up to three additional market rate units for each BMR unit above that normally required, up to a maximum zoning increase of 25% in density and allows an equivalent increase in square footage for projects that meet this requirement. The program is consistent with State law. As part of the updated Housing element, the density bonus program has been revised to allow up to a maximum zoning increase of 50% in density. The density bonus program has not yet been codified by the City but will be undertaken as part of the Zoning Ordinance update.

The BMR Program was initiated in 1974. By 2001, there were a total of 152 ownership units and 101 rental units generated by the program. Sales and resales of BMR units are

administered under contract to the City by the Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC), a private, non-profit organization. The BMR Program has generated approximately 9 BMR units per year, on average, since the initiation of the Program. This rate of production has not been sufficient to meet the City's need for affordable housing. To improve the rate of production of BMR units and increase the City's supply of affordable housing, Program H-35 of the updated housing element increases the minimum percentage of BMR units required for most projects from 10% to 15% and increase the minimum percentage of BMR units to 20% for projects five acres or greater in size.

The original goal of the BMR program was to have the initial sales price of BMR ownership units affordable to households whose incomes do not exceed 100% of the median income, adjusted for family size, as established periodically by HUD for Santa Clara County. However, with the proposed increase in the percentage of required BMR units, Program H-35 proposes to allow the BMR units to be affordable to those households earning up to 120% of the County median income to ease the finanicial burden on developers that provide BMR units. For all projects with BMR ownership units, certain restrictions are recorded with the grant deed to ensure that there will be continued occupancy and ownership of the BMR units by low- and moderate-income persons. When a BMR owner wishes to sell the unit, he or she must give the City the right of first refusal to purchase it. The City exercises its option and assigns the right to purchase the unit to a buyer selected by the PAHC (according to guidelines approved by the City). The price at which a unit is resold is calculated based on the increase in the "Consumer Price Index" for the San Francisco Bay Area during the period of ownership. Currently, one-third of the percentage increase in the Index is applied to the purchase price to determine the resale price. For example, if a unit was purchased initially for $100,000 and if the Index rose 15% during the period of ownership then the resale calculation would be $100,000 + (1/3 x 15% x 100,000) = $105,000. Certain substantial improvements and depreciation factors are also taken into consideration in calculating the resale price.

Sales and resales of BMR units are administered under contract to the City by the Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC), a private, non-profit organization. PAHC also maintains a waiting list of people interested in purchasing a BMR unit. According to City policy, priority for ownership of BMR units is given to applicants who live or work in Palo Alto. Further, there are certain household income and asset limitations.

The BMR program also applies to rental projects. Currently, at least 10% of the units in a rental project must be provided as BMR units to households earning between 50% and 80% of the County median income, adjusted for family size. Program H-35 would increase the minimum BMR set aside to 15% of all rental units. The rents are initially established based on HUD Section 8 Fair Market Rents and may be adjusted annually based on one-third of the Consumer Price Index, or other similar formula as adopted by the City Council. Alternatives include payment by the developer of an annual in-lieu fee to the City's Housing Development Fund based on the difference between the initial Section 8 fair market rents and the market rate rents of the units, or a one-time fee based on 5% of the appraised value of the rental portion of the project.

2. City Housing Funds

The City maintains a "Housing Development Fund"which is capitalized from several different resources and contains several "sub-sets" of funds. Basically, the Housing Development Fund consists of the following:

a) Residential Housing In-Lieu funds,
b) Commercial and Industrial Housing In-Lieu funds, and
c) Federal or State housing funds (i. e. CDBG and HOME) as well as program income from past loans or projects.

The Residential Housing In-Lieu Fund consists of fees paid by developers of residential projects under Palo Alto's BMR Program and any miscellaneous revenues designated for housing. When a sufficient level of funds accrue in this account, the City utilizes the funds for affordable housing development. Typically, the fund can be used for acquisition, rehabilitation, new construction, and predevelopment of low-income housing. As of March 31, 2001, the Residential Housing In-Lieu Fund had an unrestricted balance of $1,246,491.

The Commercial Housing In-Lieu fund is capitalized with fees paid by developers/owners of new or expanded commercial or industrial developments, as required by Chapter 16.47 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code. The fees are intended to off-set the below-moderate income residential demands resulting from the increased work force that will be generated by the development. Currently (2002), the fee charged is $15.00 per square foot. Similar to the Residential Housing Reserve fund, the City allocates these funds to affordable housing developments within the community. As of March 31, 2001, the Commercial Housing In-Lieu Fund had a balance of approximately $770,090.

Program H-51 of the Comprehensive Plan proposes that the formula for calculating the commercial and industrial housing in-lieu fee for projects with impacts on housing be periodically reviewed as required under Chapter 16.47 of the Municipal Code to better reflect the impact of new jobs on housing demand and cost.

The third component of the "Housing Development Fund" is State or Federal housing funds and the program income from any past housing loans or projects. For example, the City receives program income from loans made with CDBG funds in previous years. From 1990-2000, the City has received a range of $40,00-100,000 per year in program income from previous CDBG loan awards, primarily to applicants in the City's housing rehabilitation program.

Federal, State, and Other Housing Resources

1. Federal Resources

The City of Palo Alto is an "entitlement" community under the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. As such, the City receives an annual

allocation of CDBG funds to assist with affordable housing opportunities as well as economic development and public services in the community. On an average annual basis, the City has been receiving approximately $700,000 each year in CDBG funds (in fiscal year 2001/02, Palo Alto's CDBG allocation was $771,000). Traditionally, the City has used about 15% of its annual CDBG allocation, per federal regulations to help fund various social service agencies who provide support services to low- and moderate-income households. Examples of some recently funded activities with social service agencies include fair housing counseling, homeless assistance and housing information and referral. In addition, over 50% (62% in fiscal year 2000/01) of CDBG funds are used by the City to provide assistance in the development or rehabilitation of housing that is affordable to lower income households. The City directs the CDBG funds to the City's "Housing Development Fund," which is then used for pre-development expenses, acquisition of land or existing buildings and rehabilitation costs of affordable housing projects.

2. State Resources

The City is also eligible to apply for State of California housing funds. One of the more popular State funds in recent years is the "HOME" program. HOME funds are federal funds that are directly allocated to large urban areas as well as to State governments to then distribute to local communities. These funds can be used for a variety of activities, including the development or rehabilitation of renter or owner occupied housing that is affordable to very low- and low-income households. The HOME program is a very competitive program with many communities applying to the State for a limited amount of funds during an annual competition. Due to excessive demand for the State's HOME allocation, and rating criteria that do not favor areas like Palo Alto, it is difficult to secure an award. Staff will, however, continue to track the Notices of Funding Availability and evaluate all potentially suitable projects to determine whether or not to apply for a HOME grant.

The City has also worked closely with local non-profits to secure other state and federal funding. One of the most desirable programs is the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program. The Palo Alto Housing Corporation used Low Income Housing Tax Credits to build the California Park Apartments project and has received an award for construction of the Alma Place SRO. In addition, Community Housing, Inc. received federal Section 202 funds for the construction of the Lytton Courtyard project, and Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition received federal Section 811 funds to construct 24 units of housing for the developmentally disabled. The City intends to continue to pursue all sources of funding and to assist local agencies and non-profits in applying for and securing additional financing opportunities.

3. Housing Trust Fund of Santa Clara County (HTSCC)

The HTSCC is a public/private initiative dedicated to creating more affordable housing in Santa Clara County using a revolving loan fund and grant-making program to complement and leverage other housing resources. The City of Palo Alto has contributed $500,000

toward the initial $20,000,000 investment capitalization. This resource is currently available to help leverage new affordable housing projects in Palo Alto.

Affordable Housing Unit Inventory

There are several different "types" of affordable housing units in the City of Palo Alto. Some affordable rental units are owned by non-profit or for-profit developers and, because of the affordability restrictions imposed by funding sources, are affordable to a certain household income level for a fixed period of time. In addition, there are 152 BMR ownership units that are privately owned but are restricted with regard to resale and price to other low- and moderate-income households, and there are another 101 units in the BMR rental housing program. A listing of the locations of these units can be found in Appendix B of this document. Finally, the Section 8 rental subsidy program is operated by the Santa Clara County Housing Authority and provides a rental subsidy to landlords of units who rent to eligible low-income households. Any rental unit in the City can be eligible for occupancy in this program as long as the unit meets certain health, safety and occupancy requirements. According to the Housing Authority, there were a total of 253 households in Palo Alto receiving Section 8 rental subsidy assistance during fiscal year 1999/2000. Of these 253 households, 180 were elderly and/or disabled and the remaining 73 households were family households. Four households were categorized as low-income and 247 as very low-inome.

In September 2000, there were a total of 25 housing developments in the City that included 1,233 units of subsidized rental housing. These developments are owned primarily by non-profits, such as the Palo Alto Housing Corporation, but some are owned by for-profit owners. Appendix B includes a table with the addresses and number of units in each of these 25 housing developments.

Housing Support Services

There are many non-profit groups and organizations that provide housing related support services in Palo Alto. For example, the Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC) was established in 1969 and was formed to encourage and develop low- and moderate-income housing in the City. PAHC has been very active in assisting the City with the BMR Program, acting as a developer/owner of other affordable housing projects, and providing extensive information and referral services on housing in the region. Other organizations that have received City funding assistance to provide housing related support services include the Urban Ministry of Palo Alto, Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County (Long Term Ombudsman Program), Emergency Housing Consortium, Innovative Housing, Outreach and Escort, Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing, Senior Coordinating Council (Senior Repair Program), Community Association for Rehabilitation, American Red Cross (Rental Assistance, Single Parent Services), Miramonte Mental Health Services, Peninsula Area Information and Referral (tenant-landlord counseling), Support Network for Battered Women, Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition (Palo Alto Gardens Apartments, Alliance for Community Care (support services for those with mental disabilities), Clara-Mateo Alliance (homeless), and Shelter Network (transitional housing and services).

The City has provided funding to the agencies mentioned above through CDBG funds as well as City General funds. Palo Alto has a tradition of assisting non-profit groups with funding so that these groups and organizations can also provide support services and direct assistance to low- and moderate-income households in the City.

Chapter 5: Future Housing Needs

According to State Housing Element Guidelines, Housing Elements should include an analysis of the number of housing units to be built, rehabilitated and/or conserved in order to meet the community's current and future housing needs. Following is an analysis of Palo Alto's new construction, rehabilitation and conservation needs.

New Construction Needs

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) has developed estimates of housing needs for communities in the San Francisco Bay Area for 1999-2006, the time frame of the Housing Element. Under State law, ABAG is responsible for allocating the regional housing need, established by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for each region of the state, to each jurisdiction in the San Francisco Bay Area. The allocation process used information from ABAG's ***Projections 2000*** to determine each jurisdictions fair share of the region's housing need. ***Projections 2000*** examines population, household, and job growth; examines various demographic factors (e.g., age and sex of the population); and, reviews transportation patterns and other data. In addition to this data, ABAG considered the land use policies and the land use data of local governments, including the sites available for residential development and the availability of urban services. The housing need determination is primarily based on the number of households each jurisdiction is expected to create between 1999 and 2006. In addition, a weighting factor was given to projected job growth to partially represent the demand for housing generated by this growth. This weighting factor increased the housing need allocation for jurisdictions that were expected to add a significant number of jobs between 1999-2006. The local jurisdictions in Santa Clara County also agreed that, since urbanization should take place only within the urban service areas of the cities, about 75% of the Unincorporated County's Sphere of Influence housing need should be allocated to the cities where these units could be better served and urban encroachments into the County would be better contained.

Using available data and projections based on future employment and population trends, the ABAG estimates that the total projected housing need for Santa Clara County is 57,991 new units for 1999-2006. Palo Alto's share of that total need is 1,397 units or 2.4% of the County's total need.

In addition to the total housing need estimate, ABAG is charged with determining the number of housing units that are needed for each of four household income levels based on County median household income. These income levels are defined as follows: Very Low-Income – 0-50% of County median income; Low-Income – 50-80% of County median income; Moderate-Income – 80-120% of County median income; and, Above Moderate-Income – greater than 120% of County median income. The purpose of this division of housing need by income level is to more equitably distribute the type of households by income category throughout a region so that no one community is "impacted" with a particular household income group and to ensure that each jurisdiction addresses the

Chapter 5: Future Housing Needs

According to State Housing Element Guidelines, Housing Elements should include an analysis of the number of housing units to be built, rehabilitated and/or conserved in order to meet the community's current and future housing needs. Following is an analysis of Palo Alto's new construction, rehabilitation and conservation needs.

New Construction Needs

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housing needs of each economic segment in their communities. Palo Alto's fair share of the region's housing need by income level for 1999-2006 is described in the illustration below.

Illustration #18: ABAG New Construction Need by Household Income Level, January 1, 1999 to June 30, 2006

Very Low-income Households	265
Low-Income Households	116
Moderate-Income Households	343
Above Moderate-Income Households	673
TOTAL	**1,397**

The household income distributions noted above represent objectives that Palo Alto should strive to achieve in meeting its fair share of the region's housing need. Since January 1, 1999, Palo Alto has successfully produced, or has approved, housing units affordable to various income groups. These units are occupied, ready for occupancy, or will be ready for occupancy prior to June 30, 2006. Palo Alto's progress in meeting its fair share of the region's housing need are summarized in the illustration below.

Illustration #19: Progress in Meeting Palo Alto's Fair Share of the Region's 1999-2006 Housing Need by Income Level, 1999-2000

Income Level	1999-2006 Need	1999-2002 Built or Approved Units	Unmet Need
Very Low	265	24	241
Low	116	66	50
Moderate	343	24	319
Above Moderate	673	860	None
TOTAL	**1,397**	**974**	**610**

Eight hundred eighty-four (884) of the 974 units built or approved have been constructed and are already occupied or are ready for occupancy. The remaining 90 units have received building permits and are in the process of being built. Most of these units should be ready for occupancy by the end of 2004.

In reviewing the totals shown in the table above, it appears that Palo Alto has already constructed, or approved for construction, about 60% of its fair share of the region's housing need. However, it should be noted that the totals include 187 more above moderate income units than required by ABAG's assessment of Palo Alto's fair share of the region's housing need for 1999-2006. Only 114 of 724 affordable units needed, or about 16% of Palo Alto's total need for affordable housing, have currently been built or approved for construction. Palo Alto's current unmet housing need for 1999-2006 consists of 610 housing units that need to be affordable to very low-, low- or moderate-income households.

Rehabilitation Need

It is estimated that the rehabilitation need in Palo Alto is low compared to many other California communities. As indicated on page 32 of this document, it was estimated that 3% of the City's owner-occupied housing stock or approximately 437 units might have been considered substandard in the year 2000.

A review of 1990 U.S. Census data indicated that 598 units in the City were occupied by very low- and low-income homeowners and that these units were more than 50 years old (units built prior to 1940). Another 1,320 very low- and low-income homeowners occupied housing units that were constructed between 1940-59. This data provides an "upper range" or maximum ceiling of rehabilitation need for owner occupied units using the assumption that very low- and low-income households often cannot afford on-going maintenance and repair as their units "age" and that these are the type of units most often in need of rehabilitation. The 1,918 units (598 + 1,320 = 1,918) represented 7.76% of all housing units in the City in 1990. Applying this same percentage to the total number of housing units in 2000, it is estimated that approximately 1,980 of the City's owner-occupied housing units might need rehabilitation.

Overall, the rental housing stock in the City was built more recently than the owner occupied units. Information on pages 33-34 of this document summarizes 1990 U.S. Census data and indicates that the "upper range" of rental units that are older and occupied by very low- and low-income households is 1,449 units total or 5.8% of the City's housing stock. Applying this same percentage to the available 2000 Census data, it is estimated that 1,462 of the City's renter-occupied housing units might need rehabilitation.

The information given in the two paragraphs above indicate that the number of housing units needing rehabilitation in Palo Alto may range from 1,462 to 3,542 units. However, there do not appear to be any areas in the City that have concentrations of units that need rehabilitation. In fact, Palo Alto consistently has neighborhoods where the housing units are well maintained and, in many cases, reflect a high degree of pride in ownership. While the census data provides an indication of the range of units that could need rehabilitation using household income data and age of units, "drive-by" inspections of units in Palo Alto indicate that the majorityof the housing stock is in very good condition. The only area of the City that appears to have higher than average incidence of units that may need repair or replacement is the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park, which contains primarily older trailer or mobile home units.

Conservation Need

1. Energy Conservation

By owning and operating its own utilities system, the City is committed to offering its residents a high quality of utility services at the lowest possible cost. The Utilities System attempts to invest in a mix of new energy and water supply projects, operating efficiencies,

and consumer-oriented conservation and solar services, which together will enable local residents to meet their resource needs at a lower cost than in neighboring communities. Energy Services staff of the City have an active role in design review for all new construction, excluding individual single-family homes. Through this review, energy efficiency is assessed and modifications made. Landscape standards are in place that require efficient outdoor water use. Energy services staff are available to assist all property owners, architects, and builders in evaluating building plans and making recommendations for improving energy and water use efficiency.

In addition to its commitment to keep utility costs low and conserve energy, the City established a Utilities Residential Rate Assistance Program (RAP) in 1993, which reduces utility rates by 20% for qualifying households. Originally, qualifications were based on household income (approximately 37% of County median income) or physical disabilities. In 2001, the City extended this program to include households earning 50% or less of the County median income. This program has helped very low-income households pay for a key component of monthly housing costs making it somewhat easier for them to stay in their existing housing.

2. Conservation of Existing Affordable Housing

Conservation of the existing affordable housing stock is critical in today's economic climate. Because of the high cost of housing and lack of vacant land to construct new affordable housing, it is extremely important to preserve and protect those affordable housing units that already exist. State Housing Element Law requires communities to conduct an inventory of affordable units that might be "at-risk" of converting to market rate units within a 10 year time frame of the Housing Element. The inventory is to include all multifamily rental units that have been funded with federal, state or local assistance. A review of multifamily units in Palo Alto indicates that the only units that are at risk are those that have been assisted with federal funds. The only State funded project is the Barker Hotel which was assisted with State of California HOME funds and those units have affordability controls until 2033. The City has a "Below Market Rate" (BMR) program that requires 15% of units to be affordable in projects of five units or more or the payment of an in-lieu fee. The units in the BMR program have resale and affordability controls for 59 years and renew each time the property title is transferred and, therefore, are not at risk of converting to market rate.

Palo Alto has 728 units in 13 developments of very low- and low-income housing that are to varying degrees subject to increases in rent or conversion to market rate housing. These projects are listed in Illustration # 22 on the following page. These projects are assisted in part by HUD with Section 8 project-based rental assistance in which a direct subsidy is provided to the owner. The future of the Section 8 program continues to be in question. Currently, Section 8 contracts are being extended on a year-to-year basis and may be subject to rent increases in the future if the Section 8 Program is eliminated or cut back. Most of the subsidized rental projects fall under this category. There is one project with a for-profit owner considered most at-risk. (Two other formerly at-risk projects owned by for-profit owners, Sheridan Apartments and Palo Alto Gardens, have been purchased by non-profits

with City assistance between 1998-1999 and are no longer considered to be at high risk of conversion to market rate housing.) The remaining units are owned by non-profits and, for various reasons such as relatively low mortgage debt and the non-profits commitment to maintain affordable housing, are considered less at risk of being lost as affordable housing; however, the loss of Section 8 subsidies could result in increased rents, making the units less affordable to very low- and low-income households.

Illustration #20: Summary of Government Assisted Units "At Risk" for Conversions

Project	Owner/Contact	Type of Government Assistance	Previous or Existing Conversion Date/Sec.8 Status	Unit Total and Units Subject to Conversion		Tenant Type
For Profit Ownership (at higher risk of conversion)						
Terman Apartments 655 Arastradero Rd. Palo Alto, CA	Goldrich & Kest 5150 Overland Ave. Culver City, CA	221(d)(4) Section 8	Section 8 Opt:2004	92	72	Family & Elderly
Non-Profit Ownership (at lower risk of conversion; possible risk of higher rents if Section 8 subsidy lost)						
Palo Alto Gardens 648 San Antonio Rd. Palo Alto, CA	Mid-Peninsula Housing Corporation 658 Bair Island Rd., Ste. 300 Redwood City, CA 94063	221(d)(3) Title VI Section 8	1994: Title VI 1998 Section 8 (Section 8 vouchers)	156	156	Family & Elderly
Sheridan Apts. 360 Sheridan Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Palo Alto Housing Corp. 725 Alma St. Palo Alto, CA 94301	221(d)(4) Section 8	Section 8 Opt: 1999 (now year-to-year Section 8)	57	57	Elderly
Lytton Gardens I 656 Lytton Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Community Housing, Inc. 656 Lytton Avenue Palo Alto, CA	236(j)(1) Section 8	Section 8 Opt: 1996-97, 1998 (now year-to-year Section 8)	220	184	Elderly
Colorad Park 1141 Colorado Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Colorado Park Corp. 1141 Colorado Ave. Palo Alto, CA	236(j)(1) Section 8	Section 8 Opt: 1996-97, 1998 (now year-to-year Section 8)	60	25	Family
Adlai Stevenson House 455 E. Charleston Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Palo Alto Senior Housing 455 E. Charleston Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Section 202 Section 8	Section 8 Ipt: 1999 (now year-to-year Section 8)	120	24	Elderly
Elm Apartments 129 Emerson Street Palo Alto, CA	Palo Alto Housing Corp. 725 Alma Street Palo Alto, CA 94301	Section 8 Mod-Rehab	Section 8 Opt: 1997 (now year-to-year Section 8)	11	8	Family
Ferne Apartments 101-131 Ferne Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Palo Alto Housing Corp. 725 Alma Street Palo Alto, CA 94301	Section 8 Mod-Rehab	Section 8 Opt: 1997 (now year-to-year Section 8)	16	5	Family
Lytton Gardens II 656 Lytton Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Community Housing Inc 656 Lytton Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Section 202 Section 8	Section 8 Opt: 1999 (now year-to-year Section 8)	100	100	Elderly
Emerson South 3067 Emerson Street Palo Alto, CA	Palo Alto Housing Corp. 725 Alma Street Palo Alto, CA 94301	Section 8 Mod-Rehab	Section 8 Opt: 2000 (now year-to-year Section 8)	6	5	Small Family

Project	Owner/Contact	Type of Government Assistance	Previous or Existing Conversion Date/Sec. 8 Status	Unit Total and Units Subject to Conversion		Tenant Type
Non-Profit Ownership (continued)						
Arastradero Park Apts 574 Arastradero Road Palo Alto, CA	Palo Alto Housing Corp. 725 Alma Street Palo Alto, CA 94301	Section 8 Sec. 236(j)(1)	Section 8 Opt: 2000 (now year-to-year Section 8)	66	48	Family & Senior
Curtner Apartments 300-310 Curtner Ave. Palo Alto, CA	Arastradero Park Apts. C/o Palo Alto Housing Corp. 725 Alma Street Palo Alto, CA 94301	Section 8 Mod-Rehab	Section 8 Opt: 2001 (now year-to-year Section 8)	9	9	Family
Oak Manor Townhomes 630 Los Robles Ave. Palo Alto, CA	PAHC Apartments, Inc. C/o Palo Alto Housing Corp. 725 Alma Street Palo Alto, CA 94301	Section 8 Mod-Rehab	Section 8 Opt: 2008	33	23	Family
TOTAL				**946**	**716**	

3. Description of "At Risk Units"

In the past, the subsidized rental projects in Palo Alto could have been divided into two categories: those that areTitle VI (National Housing Act of 1990) eligible and those that have Section 8 Project Based Subsidies. With the acquistion of Palo Alto Gardens by the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition, there are no Title VI eligible projects remaining in Palo Alto. All other "at-risk" projects that have Section 8 Project Based subsidies are organized below according to their existing or previous funding source.

Expiration of Section 8 Project Based Subsidies:

Section 8 rental subsidies are subsidies provided directly to the project owner and the amount of the subsidy is typically determined based on the tenant's income and the rent charged. The subsidy helps tenants "afford" their monthly rent by paying a portion of the rent for them to the property owner. HUD and the property owner enter into a contract for a specified period of time during which Section 8 rental subsidy assistance will be provided. The owner was formerly able to renew the Section 8 assistance in periods of 5-15 years, depending on the contract. Currently, HUD only renews Section 8 assistance on a year-to-year basis, subject to Congressional funding. It is not known how long this year-to-year renewal will continue.

During the next decade, three projects in Palo Alto will have their current Section 8 Project Based Subsidy contracts either expiring or up for renewal. The effect of a loss of Section 8 subsidies differs depending on many factors including the underlying mortgage assistance, the percentage of households receiving rental assistance and their income levels, and each project's annual operating costs. Following is a description of the principal types of mortgage assistance which financed the affected projects.

Sec. 221(d)(4) Projects

The Terman Apartments complex is the only remaining project with a Section 221(d)(4) market rate mortgage with Section 8 project based subsidy. A 221(d)(4) project uses market rate mortgages with FHA insurance. This type of mortgage has no underlying mortgage prepayment restriction which requires continued affordability. Therefore, the units in this project could be rented at market rate and there would be no requirement that the tenants be low-income.

The only other Section 221(d)(4) project in Palo Alto, the Sheridan Apartments, was recently acquired by the Palo Alto Housing Corporation with assistance from the City of Palo Alto using available CDBG funds. This project is no longer considered "at-risk" of converting to market rate units. The Terman Apartments are the only remaining subsidized rental units seriously "at-risk" of conversion.

Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Program Projects

Under this HUD program, HUD offered 5 to 10 year contracts for Section 8 assistance to owners of existing rental housing occupied by eligible very low- and low-income households if the owner performed at least a minimum amount of property rehabilitation. In many cases, the rehabilitation work was funded by loans from local housing programs using CDBG funds or other HUD funds. The effect of a loss of Section 8 assistance depends on the specific financial circumstances of each project, especially the degree to which the owner's ability to cover debt service and operating costs depends on the revenue from the Section 8 rental contract.

There are only two remaining Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Projects in Palo Alto that have not yet had their original Section 8 contracts expire, the Curtner Apartments and the Oak Manor Apartments, and both are owned, or controlled by, the Palo Alto Housing Corporation (PAHC). The remaining Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Projects have their Section 8 contracts renewed on a year-to-year basis and all of them are also owned or controlled by PAHC. The Section 8 contract assistance enables PAHC to provide affordable housing to very low-income households. Without the Section 8 assistance, PAHC would need to increase the rents paid by the tenants, which would mean that occupancy would shift to somewhat higher income households over time. However, since these properties carry relatively low amounts of amortized mortgage debt, PAHC should be able to maintain them as affordable rental units for low-income households even without the Section 8 assistance. At present, HUD continues to offer owners of 5 or more units a one year extension of their Section 8 contract.

PAHC controls two larger projects which would be much more seriously affected by non-renewal of their Section 8 contracts. These projects are Arastradero Park Apartments and Oak ManorTownhomes. Both projects were acquired and rehabilitated by PAHC under complicated financing structures in which loans, funded from tax-exempt bonds, covered a major portion of the costs. Rental income, on par with the current Section 8 contract level, is needed for PAHC to continue to meet operating costs and repay the loans. In the case of Arastradero Park the current Section 8 contract rents exceed the rental value of the units on the open market. Since the FHA insured the Arastradero Park mortgage, HUD would probably be forced to offer PAHC some type of mortgage reduction in return for loss of the rental subsidies to avoid a default and a claim on the FHA insurance fund. However, Arastradero Park has been operating under a year-to-year renewal of its Section 8 contract.

4. Cost Analysis

The cost to conserve the units in the developments that have Project Based Section 8 Subsidies as very low-and low-income housing is as varied as the projects themselves. Some of the developments have zoning controls or deed restrictions, some have longer term contracts and some have low mortgage debt; however, as noted previously, replacement is extremely difficult given the scarcity of available land. Most of these projects have been able to extend their Section 8 contracts on a year-to-year basis. The units most at risk are

those in the Terman Apartments owned by a for-profit corporation. In 1998-99, the City of Palo Alto assisted in the purchase and conservation of Palo Alto Gardens and the Sheridan Apartments.

The Palo Alto Gardens contains 156 units originally financed in 1973 under the Section 221(d)(3) program. Its Section 8 contract expired in 1998. In June 1998, HUD converted the vouchers of eligible tenants to one-year "enhanced" Section 8 vouchers. This action provided the owners with market rents but with no increase in the tenant-paid portion of the rent. After a one-year term of the "enhanced" Section 8 vouchers, the owners would have been under no obligation to continue to accept the Section 8 households as tenants. If the owners had continued to accept Section 8 tenants, then the tenants would have had to pay the difference between the fair market rent and the real market rent set by the owners. For many of the elderly households in the complex, whose incomes are typically below $10,000 a year, this would have been a considerable hardship.

In the summer of 1998, Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition (MPHC) began discussions with the project's owners about a possible sale. By November, MPHC had finalized the purchase contract and submitted a formal request to the City for $1,000,000 in financial assistance for the acquistion. MPHC secured the principal financing for the project in February 1999 with an award of a tax-exempt bond allocation of $11.4 million and an award for federal housing tax credits. In October 1998, the City submitted an application to the State for federal HOME funds in the amount of $825,000 to assist with the costs of funding the Sheridan and Palo Alto Gardens projects. However, that application was not funded. Under the terms of the purchase agreement and the requirements of the tax-exempt bond financing, MPHC needed to close escrow on the purchase before the end of May 1999. City funds in the amount of $1,000,000 were needed to complete the purchase, but the City did not have sufficient funds available. Therefore, on February 17, 1999, the City submitted a request to HUD for approval of pre-award costs. HUD approved the City's request on March 5, 1999. This allowed the City to use local funds for a portion of its $1,000,000 loan and expend the monies to close escrow and meet the requirements of the purchase contract and other funding. On April 12, 1999, Council approved the formal loan documents for the transaction, and on April 29, 1999 escrow was closed by MPHC on the acquistion.

The Sheridan Apartment complex contains 57 single bedroom units for the elderly originally financed in 1978 under the Section 221(d)(4) FHA program with a 20-year federal Section 8 rental contract for all 57 units. Its Section 8 contract expired in 1999. In the spring of 1997, the owners decided to sell the project for conversion to market rate rental housing. PAHC entered into negotiations to buy the Sheridan with the intention of preserving its existing use as Section 8 assisted housing. PAHC's initial attempts to negotiate a purchase agreement were unsuccessful because the owner demanded a price based on market rents. The City then initiated legal action to enforce its deed restrictions. Finally, on January 13, 1998, PAHC executed a purchase agreement with the owners for a $5.1 million purchase price. On February 2, 1998, the City Council approved $145,500 in CDBG funds for PAHC for predevelopment activities. An FHA loan commitment was received by PAHC in May 1998 after which the City Council authorized a maximum City loan commitment of $2.5 million

in CDBG and City Residential Housing In-Lieu funds. In late August 1998, PAHC was awarded both state and federal tax credits and escrow closed on December 9, 1998. Rehabilitation work commenced immediately and has since been completed.

The acquistion of the two projects described above illustrates that considerable work by the Palo Alto Housing Corporation, the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition, City staff and others were necessary to preserve these projects for affordable housing. It also shows the various sources of financing that were required (bond financing, HUD and City funds, etc.) to allow for the purchase of these projects and the enormous costs involved. If the costs of the Palo Alto Gardens and Sheridan Apartments and other recent rental acquistions and rehabilitations (e.g., the Arastradero Park Apartments) are combined, the average cost to acquire, rehabilitate and conserve the units for very low-income use ranged from approximately $114,200 - $140,000 per unit. This included an average of $82,200 - $106,500 per unit for acquisition, $10,500 - $12,000 per unit for rehabilitation cost and about $21,500 per unit for other costs such as sponsor fees, transaction costs, financing (including the bond issuance) and establishing reserve funds. This cost range provides a basis for estimating the possible cost to conserve or replace the one remaining Section 8 project owned by a for-profit corporation. Using the cost range above, the cost of acquiring, conserving, and rehabilitating (or replacing) the 72 units of the Terman Apartments would be about $8,222,400 - $10,080,000.

Because the other remaining units are owned by non-profits, it is highly unlikely that they would have to be replaced or purchased at market rates. They are in danger of losing their Project Based Section 8 rental assistance, which would likely result in a modified mortgage arrangement with HUD and/or some increase in rents, but still remaining well below market rates. In addition, because of the quality and desirable location of the projects, tenants receiving Tenant Based Section 8 Subsidies are likely to continue living in the properties for some time.

Potential funding sources to pay for the cost of conserving these units are limited. Similar to the Palo Alto Gardens and Sheridan projects, City staff would assist in pursuing such funding sources as bond financing, State of California housing program funds, HOME funds, CDBG funds and City funds. Other potential funding sources might include Low Income Housing Tax Credits and Affordable Housing Program Funds from the Federal Home Loan Bank. All of these funding sources are, however, limited.

Chapter 6: Housing Constraints

Housing development can be affected by economic forces in the private market as well as regulations and policies imposed by public agencies. These constraints primarily impact the production of new housing but can also affect the maintenance and/or improvement of existing housing. The discussion below, and on the following pages, analyzes both the governmental and non-governmental ("market") constraints that can affect the housing market in Palo Alto.

Governmental Constraints

1. Land Use Controls

a) Comprehensive Plan

The ***1998-2010 Comprehensive Plan*** is Palo Alto's chief policy document governing and guiding the long-term development of the City. Besides the Housing Element, the most important portion of the Plan influencing the production of housing is the Land Use and Community Design Element. This element describes the land use categories that allow residential use and the general density and intensity limits for each of these categories. Four residential land use designations are contained in the Land Use and Community Design Element and are described below.

Single-Family Residential

Allows one dwelling unit on each lot as well as churches or schools (conditional uses). The typically allowed density range is one to seven units per acre but the upper end of this range can be increased to 14 dwelling units per acre to accommodate second units or duplexes.

Multiple-Family Residential

Allows net densities ranging from eight to 40 dwelling units per acre with more specific density limits governed by a site's zoning district and its location. Generally higher densities are permitted near major streets and public transit and lower densities next to single-family residential areas. The updated Housing Element proposes that the density ranges for each of the City's three multiple-family zoning districts be described to clarify the density limits of these zoning districts, including the minimum acceptable density or a density "floor" to encourage development at the high end of the density range. This will help to ensure that the limited residential lands available will be developed close to their full potential

Village Residential

This land use designation was added to the Comprehensive Plan in 1998 and has yet to be applied to any lands in Palo Alto. The intent of this designation is to promote housing that contributes to the harmony and pedestrian orientation of streets and neighborhoods. This designation allows a maximum density of 20 units per acre but does not establish a density floor. The updated Housing Element recommends the establishment of a density floor for

this designation. The City should intensify its efforts to find sites suitable for this land use designation to increase its housing supply.

Transit-oriented Residential

This land use designation was also added to the Comprehensive Plan in 1998 and has yet to be applied to any lands in Palo Alto. The intent of this designation is to allow higher density residential uses in the University Avenue/Downtown and California Avenue commercial centers within 2000 feet of a multi-modal transit station and thus support transit use. A maximum density of 50 dwelling units per acre is established but no density floor is described. The updated Housing Element calls for development standards that would encourage higher density development nearest to the transit stations while still preserving the character of adjacent neighborhoods. It also calls for the development of a zoning district that will achieve these ends. The City should intensify its efforts to find sites suitable for this land use designation to increase its housing supply and achieve its goal of supporting transit and reducing automobile use.

In addition to the residential land use designations listed above, the Comprehensive Plan allows residential development under non-residential (commercial and industrial) land use designations. These lands represent a significant potential housing supply but new standards must be developed for this potential to be realized. These land use designations and their general development limits are described below.

Neighborhood Commercial

This designation typically allows smaller shopping centers with retail uses that serve nearby neighborhoods. It also allows residential and mixed use projects with floor area ratios (FAR) no larger than 0.4 but does not describe an allowed density range. The updated Housing Element proposes that a density range be established and that new development standards be created for residential or mixed use projects. This will clarify the City's intent for how these sites should be used if residential or mixed use development is proposed and to maximize the residential potential of these sites. The updated Housing Element also calls for revising the Zoning Ordinance to support these uses.

Regional/Community Commercial

This designation allows larger shopping centers intended to serve markets larger than nearby local neighborhoods but it does not allow residential or mixed use. Sites with this designation are much larger than neighborhood shopping centers and contain large parking areas. These sites represent an untapped opportunity for the creation of residential and mixed use development on underutilized parking lots or other areas. This land use designation allows residential and mixed use developments with high density residential. The updated Housing Element calls for the creation of development standards and zoning revisions that would allow such development to occur.

Service Commercial

This land use designation supports citywide or regional commercial facilities for people arriving by automobile. It also allows residential and mixed use projects in some locations but does not establish density limits. The updated Housing Element proposes that, through the Zoning Ordinance Update, a density range be established and that development standards and zoning ordinance provisions be revised to support such development.

Mixed Use

This designation allows for combinations of Live/Work, Retail/Office, Residential/Retail and Residential/Office uses but it has yet to be applied to any site in Palo Alto. Further, it does not establish a residential density range to guide development. The updated Housing Element proposes that a density range be established through the Zoning Ordinance Update to realize the residential development potential of these sites.

Research/Office Park

This land use designation allows for office, research, and manufacturing establishments and a variety of other uses including residential and mixed use. This designation does not establish a density range for residential uses. The updated Housing Element calls for the establishment of a density range through the Zoning Ordinance Update. It also calls for revisions to development standards and Zoning Ordinance provisions to allow reasonable mixed use development to occur on sites with this designation.

Light Industrial

Wholesale and storage warehouses and the manufacturing, processing, repairing and packing of goods are all allowed under this designation. Residential and mixed use projects are also allowed but no residential density limits are described. The updated Housing Element proposes a density limit be established through the Zoning Ordinance Update and suggests revisions to the FAR limits and the zoning ordinance to allow reasonable mixed use development to occur on sites with this designation.

Institutional

Besides the commercial and industrial land use designations described above, the institutional lands in Palo Alto represent a potential source of housing. The updated Housing Element proposes that properties considered surplus in the Public Facilities zone and designated Institution allow residential development consistent with surrounding densities and intensities of development.

Comprehensive Plan Policy Changes

Besides the modifications to the land use changes described above, the updated Housing Element suggests a series of land use and other policy changes designed to increase the supply of affordable housing in Palo Alto. These include the following:

- Promote density changes that encourage the efficient development of scarce residential lands and that support transit use and the creation of a pedestrian friendly environment.
- Encourage the use of the Village Residential and Transit-oriented Residential land use designations.
- Encourage the redevelopment of parking areas with high density residential or mixed use in combination with parking structures.
- Revise the commercial and industrial housing in-lieu fee formula for projects impacting housing to better reflect the impact on new jobs on housing demand and costs.

b) Zoning Ordinance

The City's Zoning Ordinance is the primary tool used to manage the development of residential units in Palo Alto. The Residential Districts described in Palo Alto's Zoning Ordinance include the RE: Residential Estate District, R-1: Single-Family Residence District, R-2: Two Family Residence District, RMD: Two Unit Multiple-Family Residence District, RM-15: Low Density Multiple-Family Residence District, RM-30: Medium Density Multiple-Family Residence District, RM-40: High Density Multiple-Family Residence District and the Planned Community District. Moreover, residential development is permitted in all other zones. Permitted densities, setback requirements, minimum lot sizes and other factors vary among the residential districts. Listed below are some of the more significant factors of each of the districts.

RE Residential Estate District

The RE District is intended to create and maintain single-family living areas in more outlying areas of the City compatible with the natural terrain and the native vegetative environment. The minimum site area is one acre. Only one residential unit, plus an accessory dwelling or guest cottage, is permitted on any site. The maximum size of the main dwelling on a conforming lot is 6,000 square feet.

R-1 Single Family Residence District

The R-1 district is intended for single family residential use. Typically, only one unit is allowed per R-1 lot although, under certain conditions, accessory or second dwelling units may be allowed in addition to the primary unit. Generally the minimum lot size for the R-1 district is 6,000 square feet. However, there are certain areas of the City where the minimum lot sizes historically have been larger than 6,000 square feet and these larger lot sizes are being maintained through the Zoning Ordinance by specific R-1 zone combining districts.

Illustration #21: R-1 Districts and Minimum Site Areas

Type of R-1 District	Minimum Site Area	
R-1 General	6,000 Square Feet	(557 square meters)
R-1 (650)	7,000 Square Feet	(650 square meters)
R-1 (743)	8,000 Square Feet	(743 square meters)
R-1 (929)	10,000 Square Feet	(929 square meters)
R-1 (1858)	20,000 Square Feet	(1,858 square meters)

The R-1 District zoning regulations also specify lot coverage maximums (typically a maximum of 35% lot coverage is allowed) and Floor Area Ratios (the ratio of the house size to the lot size). Generally, the maximum floor area on a single-family lot is not allowed to exceed a floor area ratio of .45 for the first 5,000 square feet of lot area and .30 for any portion of lot area in excess of 5,000 square feet. These lot coverage and FAR limits may limit the development of second dwelling units on certain lots. In addition, there are certain height restrictions that may also limit development potential. "Daylight Plane" restrictions that apply are height limitations controlling development on residential properties. In certain areas of the City where there are predominantly single-story "Eichler" homes, there may also be limitations on adding second stories to single-story units.

R-2 and RMD Residential Districts

There are two residential districts that allow two units on a site. The R-2 Two Family Residence District allows a second dwelling unit under the same ownership as the initial dwelling unit in areas designated for single-family use with regulations that preserve the essential character of single-family use. A minimum site area of 7,500 square feet is necessary for two dwelling units in this district. The RMD Two Unit Multiple-Family Residence district also allows a second dwelling unit under the same ownership as the initial dwelling unit in areas designated for multiple-family uses. The minimum site area for two units is 5,000 square feet and the maximum density in this district is 17 units per acre.

Multiple-Family Density Districts

The Zoning Ordinance provides three categories of multiple-family residential use: low density (RM-15), medium density (RM-30) and high density (RM-40). In the RM-15 district, the permitted density range is from 6 - 15 units per acre. The updated Housing Element (Program H-5) proposes that the density floor be reevaluated through the Zoning Ordinance Update process to determine if a higher density floor of 8 units per acre is appropriate. The minimum site area is 8,500 square feet and there are setback, floor area ratio, lot coverage and height limitations also. The RM-30 district allows a range of 16 - 30 units per acre while the RM-40 allows a range of 31 – 40 units per acre. All of these districts have minimum site areas, height limitations, lot coverage and floor area ratios. In addition, all of the multiple-family zones have open space and BMR ("Below Market Rate") requirements. Further discussion of BMR requirements is included later in this chapter.

PC Planned Community District

In addition to the specific residential districts noted above, there is also the "Planned Community District" that is intended to accommodate developments for residential, commercial, professional or other activities, including a combination of uses. It allows for flexibility under controlled conditions not attainable under other zone districts. The Planned Community District is particularly intended for unified, comprehensively planned developments that are of substantial public benefit. A constraint to the PC zone related to housing is a requirement for a finding of public benefit. In a high cost area such as Palo Alto, additional public benefits discourages residential PC zone proposals. The 1998-2003 Housing Element in Program H-7, called for the development of a Planned Development Zone similar to the PC zone, but without the public benefit finding. This program has not yet been implemented but it will be addressed in the City's current Zoning Ordinance Update.

New Residential and Mixed Use Zoning Districts

Three land use designations in the Comprehensive Plan, Transit-oriented Residential, Village Residential, and Mixed Use do not yet have corresponding Zoning Districts that would fully implement them. Program H-5 of the updated Housing Element calls for the creation of zoning districts that would allow lands with these designations to be developed at the maximum densities described in the Comprehensive Plan as well as require a minimum level of residential development. Sites with these designations will be increasingly important for the City's housing supply and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan that support transit use and that seek to create a more pedestrian friendly and less auto-oriented environment.

Residential Uses in Commercial Districts

All of the City's Zoning Districts allow for residential development. In the 1970s and 1980s, several mixed use projects were developed in the commercial zones that included significant numbers of residential units. However, during the late 1980s and 1990s, financing of mixed use projects became more difficult and the City has seen a decline in mixed use proposals. In addition, the zoning ordinance requirement for Site and Design review of mixed use projects and a requirement that the more restrictive zoning requirement of either the commercial or residential zone apply have resulted in a constraint on the production of housing units in commercial zones. The 1998-2003 Housing Element called for the elimination of the requirement for site and design review of mixed use projects. Other programs were also adopted with the 1998-2003 Housing Element that were intended to encourage mixed use projects and to implement a review of the mixed use requirements with the intent of simplifying the zoning requirements and adding incentives that will encourage further residential and mixed use development in the commercial zones. None of these programs have yet been implemented and, therefore, they are carried over to the updated Housing Element, which proposes further changes in the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance to facilitate the development of residential and mixed uses in non-residential zoned areas.

Site Development Regulations

In certain instances, the City's site development regulations can be viewed as constraints to the development of housing. The City recognizes that its residential neighborhoods are distinctive and wants to preserve and enhance their special features. Since Palo Alto is basically a "built-out" community, most new single-family residential development is going to occur in existing neighborhoods through either infill lots or demolition/remodeling of existing structures. Therefore, the regulations guiding development are intended to ensure that much of what Palo Alto cherishes in its residential areas, such as open space areas, attractive streetscapes with mature landscaping and variety in architectural styles, is preserved and protected.

The typical development standards for Palo Alto's residential zoning districts are summarized in the illustration below.

Illustration #22: Existing Residential Development Standards

Zoning District	Max. Lot Coverage	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	Max. Height Limit (Feet)	Required Parking	Required Open Space (Sq. Ft.)	Density Range (DU/AC)	Avg. Dwelling Size at Max. Density (Sq. Ft.)
R-1	0.35	0.45	30	2 spaces; 1 covered	N/A	0-7	2,500+
R-2	0.35	0.45	30	1.5 spaces per unit; 1 covered	N/A	0-11	1,500+
RMD	0.40	0.50	35	1.5 spaces per unit; 1 covered	450 per unit	0-17	1,100+
RM-15	0.35	0.50	30	1.25-2.00 spaces per unit; 1 covered	50-100 per unit; 0.35 of site	6-15	1,250+
RM-30	0.40	0.60-0.75	35	1.25-2.00 spaces per unit; 1 covered	50-100 per unit; 0.30 of site	16-30	900+
RM-40	0.45	1.0	40	1.25-2.00 spaces per unit; 1 covered	50-100 per unit; 0.20 of site	31-40	900+

The development standards described above indicate that the maximum densities allowed by each residential zoning district can readily be achieved and can produce units of a reasonable size. Lot coverage, FAR and height standards increase as densities increase to accommodate the maximum density allowed by each district. Open space standards are concomitantly reduced to accommodate these increasing densities but still allow for adequate private and communal open space. Parking standards are governed by the number of bedrooms in the case of multifamily residential development and are directly related to the number of people

of driving age expected in these units. All residential development standards in Palo Alto are comparable with development standards in other Bay Area communities, including lower cost communities such as San Jose. Given this, it appears that Palo Alto's residential development standards are reasonable and do not significantly add to the cost of residential units in the City when compared to the high costs associated with the purchase of land, labor and construction materials.

Several site development regulations, however, are recognized in the Goals, Policies and Programs of this Housing Element as needing assessment and possible revision to reduce the constraints on developing housing. Currently, the City does not have a zoning district that permits the development of single-family detached units on lots of less than 6,000 square feet. Program H-6 (now Program H-11) of the previous Housing Element called for amending the zoning regulations to permit residential lots of less than 6,000 square feet where appropriate. The proposed Planned Development zone would allow for small lot developments. Program H-7 (now Program H-12) called for modifying parking requirements to allow higher densities of housing in areas where jobs, services, shared parking and transit will reduce the need for parking. These programs have not yet been implemented but they have been carried over into this Housing Element and will be addressed as part of the Zoning Ordinance Update. Program H-5 of the updated Housing Element call for allowing increased density within commercial and industrial areas, near transit centers, and in other appropriate areas. Program H-2 of the 1998-2003 and this Housing Element, as well as other programs, calls for considering minimum density requirements which could result in more housing, as well as more affordable housing. Programs H-7 and H-8 call for changing development standards to encourage the production of second units which could also result in more affordable housing. Program H-6 calls for the use of "form codes" of diverse housing types, including smaller more affordable units. Form codes would allow, essentially, the creation of performance standards that would indicate the type of housing the City would desire in a particular area but would not require strict conformance to explict numeric standards. This should make it easier for housing projects of all types to be accommodated on the smaller more difficult to develop parcels in Palo Alto and easier for higher density residential or mixed use projects to be built on underdeveloped or reuse sites.

Constraints on Housing for the Disabled

The Disabled Households section of this document (page 18) describes the housing needs of disabled households and what the City is doing to assist these households. This section will describe any potential or actual regulatory constraints, if any, on providing housing for the disabled in Palo Alto. Currently the City strictly enforces the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and state requirements to ensure that minimum housing access requirements are met. The City also enforces disabled parking standards described in its Zoning Code for all land uses. The City is not aware of any significant constraints to the provision of affordable housing for the disabled in its Zoning Code or other regulatory provisions and has been able to allow, on an ad hoc basis, regulatory changes necessary to accommodate the needs of disabled households as required by State law. However, given the recent adoption of Senate Bill SB520, which seeks to eliminate any discriminatory obstacles to providing housing for the disabled and other special housing needs groups, Program 64 of the updated Housing Element calls for a thorough review of the Zoning Code

and other pertinent development regulations during the 2002-2004 Zoning Code update to identify and correct any discriminatory obstacles. In addition, this new program calls for written procedures describing how Palo Alto will allow for the reasonable accommodation of households with special housing needs, including the disabled. Currently, the City addresses reasonable accommodation requests on an ad hoc basis and needs a more formal process. The City, on an ad hoc basis, does allow for fee waivers for housing projects serving the disabled as a means of encouraging the production of such housing

Summary

Currently, the City's Zoning Ordinance allows a range of residential densities from very low density single-family to 40 units per acre multiple-family. In conformance with Comprehensive Plan policy, it will eventually allow maximum densities of 50 units per acre for Transit-oriented Residential and similar mixed use developments. Residential uses are also allowed in commercial and industrial districts as well as planned developments within the "Planned Community" District. While certain requirements within the Zoning Ordinance (floor area ratios, height limitations, etc.) may be viewed as constraints to development, the City has adopted these requirements as a means of ensuring that 1) the distinctive residential qualities of the existing neighborhoods are preserved and, 2) new development reflects a certain level of quality that is individual and yet blends in with Palo Alto's community character. Moreover, through the adoption of the policies and programs in this Housing Element, the City is seeking to reduce these constraints. Further, the updated Housing Element calls for density increases and modified development standards that would more easily allow development to occur at the higher end of the density range while still preserving community character. All of these efforts will be addressed in the Zoning Ordinance Update.

2. Local Processing and Permit Procedures

There are various levels of review and processing of residential development applications, depending on the size and complexity of the development. For example, single-family use applications that require a variance or home improvement exception can be handled by the Director of Planning. More complicated applications, such as subdivision applications or rezoning, require review and approval by the Planning Commission and City Council and, in some instances, the City's Architectural Review Board.

Residential Development applications that fall under the responsibility of the Director of Planning are usually processed and a hearing held within 6-8 weeks of the application submittal date. This includes review by the Architectural Review Board, which is required for all residential projects except singly-developed single-family houses and duplexes. Rezonings and minor subdivision applications typically have a longer time frame since they must be heard before both the Planning Commission and the City Council. Generally, an application will be heard by the Planning Commission 7-10 weeks after application submittal. Local ordinance requires the City Council to consider the Planning Commission recommendations within 30 days; therefore, there would be a maximum of 30 more days after the Planning Commission hearing for the City Council's action on the application. If the application is for a major Site and Design or Planned Community rezoning, then the

Architectural Review Board will conduct a hearing after the Planning Commission Hearing and this could affect the time frame. Further, all of the time frames referenced above assume that all environmental assessment and/or studies have been completed for the development. Additional time will be required if there are any environmental issues that need to be studied or resolved as a result of the environmental assessment. These permit processing timelines are comparable to other jurisdictions in the Bay Area.

Architectural Review Board (ARB) approval is required for all residential projects except singly-developed single-family homes and duplexes. The ARB sets certain standards of design in order to keep the high quality of housing in Palo Alto. This includes a preference for naturally weathering materials, and "genuine" materials such as true clay tiles. The ARB process may add time and may result in requiring a higher level of design, materials and construction, which can be a constraint to the development of housing; however, the level of review and the upgrade in materials has the long term benefit of lower maintenance and higher retention of property values. Moreover, the construction of thoughtful and well-designed multi-family housing has sustained community support for higher density projects and has resulted in community support for residential projects at all income levels. The preferences on materials are sometimes waived for affordable housing projects.

In an effort to make the design review process in Palo Alto more efficient and predictable, the City has developed design guidelines for key areas of the City and preliminary review processes for major development projects. The design guidelines cover sensitive areas of the City and include the El Camino Real area (where most of the new multifamily housing in Palo Alto is expected to locate), the Downtown, the Baylands, and the South of Forest Avenue (SOFA) area. These guidelines describe the design issues and neighborhood sensitivities each development project in these areas must address and the types of designs and design elements that would be acceptable in these areas and, thus, ensure that new projects are compatible with existing neighborhoods while also creating and maintaining a desirable living and working environment.

The City has established two preliminary review processes for significant development projects to assist developers in identifying critical issues to be addressed and potential design problems to be resolved prior to filing a formal application. A small fee is charged for this optional service but these processes can save a great deal of time by proactively addressing issues that could delay construction of a project, which, ultimately, is the greatest contributor to increasing project development costs. The Preliminary Architectural Review process allows the City's Architectural Review Board (ARB) to review potential projects or project concepts and give useful direction during the initial or formative design steps of the project. Planning staff also reviews the project to ensure compliance with Zoning Code requirements and other pertinent design guidelines and planning policies. The preliminary process also provides other City departments with an opportunity to comment on the proposed project and identify concerns and requirements the project must address.

The Development Project Preliminary Review process maximizes opportunities for developers and the City to discuss a major development project and allows the City Council to review, comment and provide initial direction regarding the nature and design of the project before it is filed. The project issues covered include potential environmental

problems and major policy issues in addition to the design issues covered in the Preliminary Architectural Review process. Planning staff and other City department staff also review the project for compliance with all pertinent City codes and guidelines. Both of these processes give the developer valuable information that will prevent costly project redesigns and other potential delays that could significantly increase the cost of a project.

Since processing delays can significantly increase the cost of a housing basis, the City does, on an ad hoc basis, provide for preferential or priority processing for affordable housing projects. The 1999-2006 version of the Housing Element formalizes preferential or priority processing for affordable housing projects.

In regard to codes and enforcement, the City has adopted the Uniform Building Code (UBC), published by the International Conference of Building Officials, which establishes minimum construction standards. Although a locality may impose more stringent standards, it cannot adopt any that are less restrictive than those of the UBC. Thus, the City cannot modify the basic UBC requirements. The City also administers certain State and Federal mandated standards in regards to energy conservation and accessibility for disabled households. In reviewing these standards, certain requirements especially in regard to handicapped accessibility may be viewed as a constraint to housing production. The City has no direct control over these types of requirements other than working with local legislators on a federal and state level to modify and make the requirement more realistic.

The City's development fee structure does not appear to be a significant impediment to residential development. Residential developments are charged fees according to the value of the project for building, planning and fire review. For infill and individual single-family development, the Public Works fees are minimal and estimated to be less than $500 per unit. For a residential subdivision, the most significant Public Works fee would be the fee for a Street Work Permit, which is 5% of the value of the street improvements. The City's Utility Department does charge for sewer and water hook-ups.

The following illustration provides fee estimates for prototype projects that could be built in Palo Alto. The fee estimates for multifamily units are based on a one acre site being developed with a 30 unit project, each unit about 900 square feet in area and served with a one car, 200 square foot carport. The single-family project assumes seven units are built on a one acre site, each unit with 2,000 square feet of living area and a 400 square foot two car garage. This illustration indicates what impact Palo Alto fees might have on a reasonably typical residential project, but does not account for unusual circumstances such as the need for a variance.

Illustration #23: Estimated Fees for Residential Projects

Type of Fee	Estimated Fee per Unit for a Multi-family Project	Estimated Fee per Unit for a Single-Family Project
Planning		
Preliminary Review	$23	$96
Arch. Review Board Review	$61	$360
Environmental Review (Neg. Dec.)	$100	$429
Subdivision (Tentative and Final Map)	$221	$945
Zone Change	$167	$715
Public Notices	$4	$17
Subtotal	*$576*	*$2,576*
Building, Fire, & Public Works		
Permit	$1,000	$1,700
Building Plan Check	$750	$1,275
Zoning Plan Check	$250	$425
Fire Plan Check	$450	$765
Public Works	$17	$71
Mechanical, Plumbing and Electrical	$273	$507
Subtotal	*$2,740*	*$4,743*
Utilities (New Connections)		
Gas Service	$100	$2,056
Sewer Service	$145	$3,900
Water Service	$230	$2,694
Subtotal	*$475*	*$8,650*
Infrastructure		
Parks	$5,210*	$7,960
Community Center	$1,250*	$1,900
Libraries	$470*	$720
Subtotal	*$6,930**	*$10,580*
Grand Total	**$10,721**	**$26,549**

*For projects with units less than 900 square feet, the Parks Fee is $2,634, the Community Center Fee is $630 and the Libraries Fee is $236 for a total of $3,500.

The fees for parks, community centers, and libraries that add $10,580 to the price of a single-family dwelling and $6,930 to the price of a multifamily dwelling were recently adopted this year (2002). These new fees are likely to increase the cost of a median priced single-family dwelling by about 1% and increase the cost of a median priced multifamily dwelling by about 1.3%. Combined with additional planning, building and other fees the City charges, Palo Alto's fee structure adds about 2.6% to the cost of a median priced single-family dwelling and about 2% to the cost of a median priced multifamily dwelling. These increased costs are not signficant when compared to the cost of land, labor and materials in Palo Alto but they could impact affordable housing projects with limited budgets. Due to this factor, the City has exempted all 100% affordable housing projects from the new parks, community centers, and libraries fees and will exempt all affordable housing units (including all BMR units) from these infrastructure fees under the new programs of the updated Housing Element. It should also be noted that Palo Alto's fee schedule is less costly for multifamily units than single-family units, which provides some incentive for the increased production of multi-family units. In addition, the fee schedule reduces the fees for multifamily units of less than 900 square feet to $3,500, approximately 50% less than the larger units. This provides an incentive for development of smaller, less expensive units.

Palo Alto's building and planning permit processing fees are comparable to similar fees charged by other jurisdictions in the Bay Area. It should be noted, however, that these fees are designed only to cover the cost the City incurs to process these development applications and provide the support services needed by City staff. The City currently allows the waiver of existing fees for very low- and low-income housing projects when appropriate. The updated Housing Element proposes under Programs H-21 and H-22 that affordable housing projects be exempt from infrastructure impact fees and, where appropriate, waive the imposition of development fees.

Other public service districts of course may charge fees that are outside of the control of the City. The most significant of these fees in Palo Alto are school impact fees. The Palo Alto Unified School District adopted a fee schedule in 2000 that specifies a fee of $2.05 per square foot for residential units.

3. Below Market Rate (BMR) Program

The City's BMR Program has been in existence since 1974 and has produced 152 for-sale residential units and 101 rental units by 2001. The program was initiated to fill a gap in affordable housing between households making above moderate-income, who it was felt could afford their own housing, and low-income households, who could be assisted by other state and federal programs. The program has built-in provisions that result in the units in the program being more affordable over time when compared to market rate units and median income, owner households.

The BMR Program could be considered a constraint to the production of housing, however, in high cost cities such as Palo Alto, this type of program is necessary to augment the production of moderate cost housing. The BMR program has several options for the developer and allows for the developer to recoup the direct construction and financing costs

of the unit excluding land, marketing, offsite improvements and profit. The City requires that BMR units be included in all residential projects of five or more units, and the units be mixed throughout a project. The result is a diversity of income within housing developments throughout the City.

Although Palo Alto's current BMR Program has endeavored to increase the supply of affordable housing, it has managed to create only about 7.5 units a year of affordable housing, which is clearly not sufficient to meet the City's need for affordable housing. To increase the supply of affordable housing, the updated Housing Element proposes that the BMR requirement for affordable housing be increased from 10% to 15% for projects of less than 5 acres. The BMR requirement for projects on five or more acres is proposed to be increased from 15% to 20%. The cost to developers of these increases will be offset by allowing the BMR ownership requirement to be satisfied by providing housing affordable to those households earning up to 120% of the County median income in a third of the units rather than the current limitation of providing ownership housing affordable to only those households earning 100% or less of County median income.

4. Land Availability

The greatest housing constraint facing Palo Alto is the very limited supply of land available for residential use. Palo Alto is basically a "built-out" community. The lack of vacant land, however, has resulted in an effort to "recycle" land parcels with commercial or industrial zoning that are vacant or have other land uses that are economically marginal. The City's long-term policy to discourage the rezoning of residential land to commercial use, while encouraging the rezoning of commercial lands for residential use, has resulted in 46 sites being rezoned from commercial to residential since 1978. During the same time period, only 10 sites have been changed from residential to commercial. This policy of limiting conversion of residential land is strengthened in the updated Housing Element.

Given the dearth of vacant, residentially zoned land available, Palo Alto must identify and rezone underutilized residential and non-residential lands sufficient to meet its unmet housing needs. These lands could be rezoned to allow solely residential use or to allow mixed uses that require a minimum level of residential development rather than solely commercial or industrial use. During the preparation of this Housing Element, City staff began the Housing Opportunities Study, which included a series of field investigations and the collection of other information to identify those sites most suitable for residential use or conversion to residential use. Staff focused primarily on existing commercial or industrial lands that appeared to be underutilized, or that were nearing the end of their economic life, where market forces are likely to promote a change in use in the near future. Some of these sites were more promising than others and should be given priority in the City's efforts to convert non-residential sites to residential use. To this end, the City has established a list, or inventory, of sites suitable for the production of housing during the 1999-2006 time frame of this Housing Element. The range of units expected from the Inventory is illustrated below. (The Housing Sites Inventory is described in detail in Appendix E.)

The Inventory consists primarily of sites already zoned for residential use (either conventional residential or Planned Community zones) or sites that have combined

residential and non-residential zonings that can be relatively easy to convert to residential use in terms of policy or practical reasons. For example, all of the sites contained in the Inventory would not require changes in the Comprehensive Plan to allow residential use. However, several of the sites may require rezoning or partial rezoning to achieve the desired dwelling unit yields. A few of the sites are vacant but most are occupied by uses or buildings that are older or underutilized and are likely to be reused with higher value residential or mixed use within the next five years. It is expected that most of these sites would be rezoned and converted to solely residential use but mixed use projects would not be prohibited as long as a minimum amount of residential development was part of the mix. These sites could generate at least 818 units using just the lower end of the density ranges allowed on these sites.

In addition to the Housing Sites Inventory, a list of other sites (see Appendix F) that may be considered suitable for future residential use is also provided. This second list consists of sites that are typically zoned for commercial or industrial use and are currently occupied by non-residential uses. It also includes publicly owned properties, such as parking lots, which could accommodate residential use. As in the Inventory, these sites could be considered underutilized or nearing the end of their expected economic life. These sites are likely to have more or higher valued improvements than the Inventory sites which will make them more costly to purchase and redevelop, but this may be offset by limiting new development to the parking lot or storage areas of these sites. These sites may also face environmental or other obstacles to their conversion to residential use but these obstacles are not insurmountable. Preparing these sites for residential or commercial use may also take more time, but most of these sites are located in areas with good access to transit or transportation facilities, are adequately provided with urban services, and are near retail and service uses that could support their redevelopment to residential or mixed use. More of these sites might be rezoned or used for mixed use development than the sites in the Inventory. Some of these sites may require amendments to the Comprehensive Plan for development of higher density housing or mixed use development. Modifications to the Zoning Ordinance may also be required, such as new, more flexible development standards for commercial zoning districts that would allow more substantial combined residential and retail commercial development or require other policy changes, such as encouraging the use of air rights.

The second list may act as a reserve of potential land suitable for residential development which may not be needed during the 1999-2006 time frame of this Housing Element but could be made available if the sites in the Inventory prove to be unavailable for housing. The Housing Opportunities Study is an ongoing effort and may add more sites to this list over the life of this Housing Element.

The Inventory provides more than sufficient housing opportunities for Palo Alto to meet the unmet portion (610 units) of its fair share of the region's housing needs as described in Chapter 5. The City is committed under Housing Program H-14 to rezone enough of the lands in the Inventory to meet this need by 2004. This should allow sufficient time for developers to acquire land, receive permit approvals and build the housing needed in Palo Alto prior to June 2006.

Illustration #24: Housing Sites Inventory

Site No.	Site Address	Description	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Site Size in Acres	Minimum Dwelling Unit Yield *
5-01	Bryant, Channing & Ramona	Oak Court (SOFA affordable housing)	AMF	AMF	1.23	53
5-06	800 High St.	Peninsula Creamery site	CD-S(P)	PC pending (61 units requested)	0.96	26
5-21	657-663 Alma St. (north corner of Alma St. and Forest Ave.)	Former Craft and Floral building	CD-C(P) CD-S(P)	Mixed Use	0.48	10
5-28	33, 39 & 45 Encina Ave. near El Camino Real	Proposed Opportunity Center	CS	PC pending (90 units requested)	0.43	90
5-30	841 Alma St.	Power substation	PF	TBD	0.36	10
5-31	901-925 High St.	Auto storage and parking	CD-S(P)	Mixed Use (Application pending for 12 units)	0.46	10
8-06	2650 Birch St. at Sheridan Ave.	2 vacant lots and 4 houses	RM-40	RM-40	0.57	15
8-09(a)	2701 El Camino Real	Former Greenworld Nursery	RM-40, CN	RM-40 or Mixed Use	0.98	30
8-09(b)	2755 El Camino Real	VTA Park & Ride Lot	PF	RM-40	0.48	15
8-11	E. side Sheridan Ave. btwn. SPRR and Park Blvd.	Underutilized industrial bldgs.; portion of Page Mill Rd. r.o.w.	GM(B)	RM-40	3.92	120
10-02	901 San Antonio Rd.	Former Sun Microsystems/ Future JCC	GM	Mixed Use	12.92 (portion)	200
12-01	4102 El Camino Real at Vista	Former Blockbusters	RM-30	RM-30	0.65	9
12-06	4219 El Camino Real	Hyatt Rickey's Hotel	CS(H)	CS(H) (Application pending for 302 units)	15.98 (portion)	120
12-07	4249 El Camino Real	Elk's Lodge	RM-30, RM-15, R-1	RM-30, RM-15, R-1	8.08	97
12-09	4146 El Camino Real	Vacant	RM-15	RM-15	0.77	5
12-11	3445 Alma St.	Alma Plaza	PC	PC pending (10 units requested)	4.21 (portion)	8
Total						**818**

New state legislation (AB2292) requires compensating changes in the inventory if fewer units are permitted on a site. A larger number of units may be approved on any site when consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, zoning and state law.

The City's Housing Sites Inventory has identified sufficient land suitable for residential development to meet its 1999-2006 housing needs but its efforts to find sites suitable for housing will not end there. Palo Alto intends to continue to implement its Housing Opportunities Study (HOS) (see Program H-13) by identifying sites that may be available through redevelopment for housing or mixed uses; those sites should supplement the Housing Sites Inventory. Conversely, further investigation of sites on the list identifying potential longer term housing sites may find that some of these sites are unsuitable for residential development. The HOS should be considered an ongoing process for Palo Alto since new housing opportunities may arise and the City will need to be flexible to take advantage of these opportunities. The City must also continue to look for suitable, new housing sites beyond the 2006 limit of this Housing Element.

Information in Chapter 5 of this document summarizes the number of new residential units needed to meet Palo Alto's estimated fair share of the region's housing needs. As page 44 indicates, Palo Alto's share of the region's housing need is 1,397 units for the 1999-2006 time frame.

The 1,397 unit estimate is sub-categorized into units needed by household income level. As indicated in Chapter 5 on page 44 of this document, Palo Alto has already made substantial progress in meeting its housing needs. The following describes the remaining housing need estimates for Palo Alto by household income level after accounting for the number of housing units built or approved for construction between 1999 and the end of 2000 (see Appendix D).

Illustration#25: Unmet Housing Need by Household Income, 1999-2006

241 Units	Very Low-Income Need (0-50% of Median)
50 Units	Low-Income Need (51-80% of Median)
319 Units	Moderate-Income Need (81-120% of Median)
0 Units	Above Moderate-Income Need (120%+ of Median)
610 Units	**TOTAL UNMET NEED**

Although Palo Alto has already provided more than enough housing to meet the needs of the above moderate-income households it is expected to generate, it has considerably more to do to meet the needs of the very low-, low-, and moderate-income households seeking to live in the City. As indicated in the table above, the City must have sufficient land to accommodate 610 units of affordable housing. The extremely high housing costs of Palo Alto will make it difficult for the City to achieve this goal. In Chapter 3 of this document, we found that the City's most affordable housing is multiple-family rental housing. Palo Alto needs to substantially increase the opportunities for this type of housing if it is to meet this need.

To create more affordable housing opportunities, ABAG's ***Blueprint 2001: Housing Element Ideas and Solutions*** (pages 3-10) suggests that Medium Density Residential zoning designations should allow at least 18 dwelling units per acre and High Density Residential zoning designations should allow at least 30 units to the acre. These density targets are roughly equivalent to Palo Alto's RM-30 Medium Density Multiple-Family Residence District (16-30 dwelling units per acre) and the RM-40 High Density Multiple-

Family Residence District (up to 40 dwelling units per acre). The Housing Sites Inventory discussed above focuses primarily on those sites that can accommodate RM-30, RM-40 or higher density residential or mixed use development to meet the City's affordable housing needs. This inventory, with its suggested zoning changes, indicate that Palo Alto will have more than enough land to provide the opportunities necessary to build housing for 610 very low- to moderate-income households. In fact, the development potential of the Housing Sites Inventory at the lower end of the potential dwelling unit yield is about 818 units or about 42% more than would be necessary to accommodate the unmet need of 610 units. This exceeds HCD's suggested strategy of "overzoning" lands for residential use by at least 20% above the minimum amount needed to meet a jurisdiction's share of the region's housing needs. It should be noted that most of the sites on the Inventory are currently zoned, or will be zoned, to support density ranges to provide the maximum potential for the construction of affordable housing in Palo Alto.

The City takes its commitment to encourage the construction of affordable housing very seriously. In recent years, Palo Alto has had some success in assisting in the building, and not just planning for, affordable housing. During the late 1990s, the 107 unit Alma Place SRO (very low-income housing), the 24 unit Page Mill Court (developmentally disabled, very low-income housing), and 159 low-income rental units of the Stanford West Project (currently under construction) were all built, or being built, in Palo Alto. The City has established and is proposing as part of this Housing Element, numerous policies and programs to encourage the additional development of housing, particularly housing affordable to very low-, low- and moderate-income households. These include allowing for increased densities near transit; consideration of increasing minimum densities; zoning incentives for smaller, more affordable housing; evaluation of second dwelling unit regulations to encourage the creation of more units; revised regulations to allow residential lots of less than 6,000 square feet and modifications to reduce parking requirements when affordable housing is located near jobs, services and transit.

The City will do what it can to encourage the construction of higher density, affordable residential projects. However, since the City of Palo Alto does not itself build housing, the City cannot guarantee that providing the necessary housing opportunities means that the required housing will be built. Even with the strong commitment of the City to provide affordable housing, it will be difficult for Palo Alto to provide many more units for very low- and low-income households. The primary reasons are a lack of available low cost land and the limited availability of subsidy funds. The City will continue to use public and private resources to make a good-faith effort to provide as many units as it can in meeting its fair share of the region's housing need as well as the City's own commitment to provide housing for all income groups and a diversity of housing throughout the City.

5. Infrastructure

The City of Palo Alto is an older and well-established community in terms of infrastructure. The City owns and manages its utilities, including water and electrical. According to staff from the City Public Works Department, there are no significant infrastructure constraints that would affect anticipated residential development. The City's wastewater and water systems both have sufficient capacity to serve expected residential growth, although some

local service lines need expansion or extension. On-going maintenance and repair of existing storm drainage, water, and wastewater improvements are identified as part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Needed repairs are prioritized in the CIP and projected over a multi-year period.

While there appear to be no significant infrastructure constraints on a citywide basis, there may be constraints on a site-by-site basis depending on the site's proximity to existing utility and service lines and whether there would be a need to provide additional connections or upgrades to those lines. These types of improvements would typically be the responsibility of the property owner/developer.

6. Environmental

There are some areas in the City that have specific environmental areas of concern. There are several sites on the poterntial longer term housing sites list in the foothill area of the City that are within a specific earthquake fault zone area. These sites require in-depth soils reports and peer review as part of their development approval process. Moreover, the entire City is subject to moderate to severe earth movement during a seismic event.

According to the City Public Works Department staff, approximately 25-30% of the City is within the flood hazard zone. Structures within this zone must meet certain building requirements when expanding or improving the property if the improvement is greater than 50% of the value of the property. Some areas of the City have isolated cases of pollution of the soil and groundwater that may require clean-up, and the close proximity of groundwater to the surface may limit excavation and require additional foundation stabilization.

Finally, many available sites are limited by noise constraints from vehicular traffic and railroad trains. Sound walls or additional noise barriers may be required to reduce noise to acceptable levels for residential use. These requirements could be viewed as constraints in that they increase the cost and may prohibit owners from undertaking improvements. The City, however, has limited control over these requirements since they are primarily regulated by state and federal agencies.

Market Constraints

There are a number of costs involved in the development of housing. These include land and construction costs, sales and marketing, financing and profit. Because these costs are so "market sensitive, " it is difficult for a local government to reduce them in any way." Listed below are some of the more significant market related issues.

1. Financing Costs

Financing costs are primarily dependent on national economic trends and policy decisions. At the time this Housing Element was prepared (2001- 2002), fixed mortgage rates for single-family residential housing varied from 5.75 to 7.25% for a 30 year fixed conforming loan as compared to 8.2% in 1997. This means that financing a home has become somewhat easier in the last few years. Adjustable rate loans were slightly lower than fixed conforming

loans, ranging from starting rates of 5.75% up to 7% and with maximum lifetime caps in the 10.95 - 12% range. Financing from both mortgage brokers and retail lenders (banks, savings and loans) is available in the Palo Alto area. The availability of financing, then, is not a constraint to the purchase of housing in Palo Alto, although financing for development of condominiums, rental housing and mixed use projects, can still be difficult to obtain. Financing costs for subsidized housing are more difficult, as the competition for the limited available funds is very severe.

2. Land and Construction Costs

The actual costs of developing and building housing in Palo Alto could be viewed as a constraint to housing, especially affordable housing. Vacant land is scarce in Palo Alto - less than 0.5% of the City's land is vacant and less than 15 acres of vacant land is zoned for residential use. Because of the lack of vacant parcels, it is anticipated that underutilized sites or sites zoned for commercial/industrial uses will become more feasible for re-use to residential designations. The City continues to review non-residentially designated areas and underutilized sites for potential residential uses and is encouraging the integration of residential use into commercial/industrial areas.

The scarcity of vacant land has resulted in increased costs of purchasing any available land. Residentially zoned (multiple-family zoning districts) property has more than doubled in value since 1996 and can sell for $150-$167 per square foot or more depending on its location and development potential. Individual single-family lots, if available, are typically over $900,000 or more in price for a 5,000 to 16,000 square foot lot. Commercially zoned land (outside of the downtown core) may have also doubled in value to over $150 per square foot. Thus, a one acre site could be worth in excess of $6.5 million.

Construction costs in Palo Alto are also expensive but are similar to those of surrounding communities. Discussions with private and non-profit developers and City staff indicate that multiple-family residential construction costs can range from approximately $200 per square foot to $250 or higher per square foot depending on amenities and the quality of construction materials. It becomes difficult to build housing, particularly affordable housing, with this range of construction cost. For example, using $250 per square foot as an estimate, a 1,000 square foot home would cost $250,000 just for construction costs and excluding land costs, off-site improvements, processing fees and financing costs. Even with the "economies of scale" of multi-family construction, costs are still high for those units. Unfortunately, construction costs are dependent on many factors including labor costs, material costs and competition in the market place and are beyond the control of the City. In order to develop housing that is affordable, especially to very low- and low-income households, substantial public subsidies are routinely required because of the high cost of land and construction.

Chapter 7: Review of 1998-2003 Housing Element

Background Information

State Housing Element Guidelines require that communities evaluate their previous Housing Elements according to the following three criteria:

- Effectiveness of the Element,
- Progress in Implementation, and
- Appropriateness of Goals, Objectives and Policies.

The City's most recent Housing Element was amended and adopted in 1998 and covered the five-year period of 1998-2003. In November 1998, the State of California, Department of Housing and Community Development, found the Housing Element to be in compliance with State Housing Element law. Therefore, the 1998-2003 Housing Element was the most current Housing Element of the City at the time that this 2002 Housing Element Technical Document was prepared. The 1998-2003 version of the Housing Element recognized that it would be an interim document, that it was essentially an extension of the 1990 Housing Element, and that it would be revised once ABAG prepared a new housing needs determination for all jursidictions in the San Francisco Bay Area. Since the 1998-2003 Housing Element is being updated in the middle of its designated time frame, many of the policies and programs have not been implemented or only partially implemented; therefore, the effectiveness of these policies and programs cannot be completely evaluated. This should be kept in mind when considering the progress of the 1998-2003 Housing Element presented below.

Policies, Programs and Goals

There were 23 policy statements in the 1998-2003 Housing Element that reflected the City's overall goals for addressing housing needs. Within each policy statement, the Element identifies specific housing programs to implement each of the policy statements. Following the outline of the 1998-2003 Housing Element, the following analysis evaluates each of the 23 policy statements and the programs and objectives quantified for each of the policy statements. This analysis is followed by a table summarizing the City's progress in providing its fair share of the region's housing need from 1990-1998.

Policy H-1: Meet community and neighborhood needs as the supply of housing is increased.

Palo Alto was able to meet more than half the needs of its very low- (57%) and above moderate-income households (53%) but was only able to produce 10% of the housing needed for low-income households and 15% for moderate income households. As already shown, the most affordable housing in Palo Alto is multiple-family residential development at densities allowed under the RM-30 and

RM-40 zoning districts or at even higher densities. The City must increase its efforts to produce affordable housing for very low-, low- and moderate-income households, which means that more of this type of multiple-family residential land must be made available during the time frame of this Housing Element and that the lands currently planned for multiple-family residential, or that allow mixed use, must be developed at or near the high end of their allowed density ranges.

Policy H-2: Consider a variety of strategies to increase housing density and diversity in appropriate locations.

Program H-1: Allow for increased housing density immediately surrounding commercial areas and particularly near transit centers.

Program H-2: Consider enacting minimum density requirements in multiple-family zones.

Program H-3: Evaluate zoning incentives that encourage the development of diverse housing types, including smaller, more affordable units and two- and three-bedroom units suitable for families with children.

Program H-4: Evaluate the provisions for second dwelling units in single-family areas to determine how additional units might be provided.

Program H-5: Create a Planned Development zone that allows the construction of smaller lot single family units and other innovative housing types without the requirement for a public benefit finding.

Program H-6: Amend zoning regulations to permit residential lots of less than 6,000 square feet where smaller lots would be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

Program H-7: Modify parking requirements to allow higher densities and reduced housing costs in areas appropriate for reduced parking requirements.

The Comprehensive Plan has created the Transit-oriented Residential land use designation that would allow increased densities near transit stations but this designation has not yet been applied to any specific sites. Other land use designations, such as Mixed Use and Village Residential could also be used to increase densities in appropriate areas. The City needs to identify sites where these designations can be applied. Zoning districts for these land use designations also need to be created so they can be implemented. The Zoning Ordinance currently contains minimum density requirements in multiple-family zones but these requirements need to be clarified. This is being pursued in the current Zoning Ordinance Update. Proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance to increase housing densities in conformance with Comprehensive Plan land use designations have not been implemented

but are currently being studied by the City in the Zoning Ordinance Update, which is currently in progress.

Policy H-3: Support the designation of vacant or underutilized land for housing.

The City continues to support the redesignation of vacant or underutilized land for housing but there has been little vacant land available for redesignation over the last three years. As a result, no new vacant lands have been rezoned for housing. There is more of a supply of underutilized land available and the City has used some of this land for residential or mixed use residential/commercial development but only in relatively small amounts. The City must increase its efforts to find and convert non-residential land to residential use as called for in the updated Housing Element.

Policy H-4: Encourage mixed use projects as a means of increasing the housing supply while promoting diversity and neighborhood vitality.

Program H-8: Evaluate the effectiveness of existing incentives that encourage mixed use and residential development on commercially zoned land and determine additional incentives to be provided.

Program H-9: Use coordinated area plans and other tools to develop regulations that support the development of housing above and among commercial uses.

Program H-10: Encourage the development of housing on parking lots by adopting incentives that will lead to housing production while maintaining the required parking.

Program H-11: Eliminate the requirement for Site and Design review for mixed use projects.

The City allows residential use in all commercial zones and utilizes the site-specific Planned Community (PC) zone to encourage mixed use housing projects. During the preparation of the 1998-2003 Housing Element, a review of the mixed use regulations indicated that these regulations did not facilitate mixed use development. The City concluded that a specific mixed use zoning district, or at a minimum, revisions to existing zoning standards in the commercial and industrial districts that allow mixed uses or housing are needed to allow greater development flexibility and to decrease the need for variances and modifications to site development regulations. These revisions would help increase the potential for mixed use developments.

The City intends to continue to pursue modifications to the zoning regulations to encourage mixed use housing projects and better utilization of available land. Items to be considered

include reuse of parking lots, reduced parking requirements and other incentives, horizontal mixed use, and greater efforts to work with employers to obtain additional housing development. All of these items are currently being consider under the Zoning Ordinance Update and a draft revision of the Zoning Ordinance is expected in 2004.

The only coordinated area plan the City is currently engaged in is in the South of Forest Area (SOFA) in southern Downtown. The advisory group working on this plan is in the process of reviewing possible land use mixes including high density housing over commercial or office use. The work of this group should be completed in 2003.

Three residential development projects were built over or replaced existing parking lots in the early 1990s but none has occurred in the last half of that decade. The City wants to continue to encourage this type of development and is looking for ways to make this type of development easier to accomplish. Also, a few small mixed use projects have occurred in the 1990s but this type of development needs to be increased given that most of the City's underutilized lands are in commercial or industrial areas. A means of encouraging that type of development would be to reduce the processing obstacles that developers face. The issues of parking lot development incentives and modifications to the Site and Design Review process for mixed use projects are currently being considered in the Zoning Ordinance Update. A draft version of the revised Zoning Ordinance is expected in 2004.

Policy H-5: Discourage the conversion of lands designated as residential to non-residential uses, unless there is no net loss of housing potential on a community-wide basis.

No residential lands were converted to non-residential use in Palo Alto between 1998 and 2000. However, institutional uses, such as churches and schools, are competing for the same land as residential uses. The City needs to reinforce its policies discouraging the conversion of residential land, especially multiple-family residential land, to protect this very limited resource. The revised Housing Element includes a new program, H-20, that addresses this issue.

Policy H-6: Support the reduction of governmental and regulatory constraints to the production of affordable housing.

Program H-12: Where appropriate and feasible, allow waivers of development fees as a means of promoting the development of housing affordable to very low- and low-income households.

The City continues to regularly evaluate its zoning requirements, building codes, fees, and development procedures to eliminate barriers to affordable housing. The fee waiver process is currently being developed. Draft revised Zoning Ordinance standards will be proposed in 2004.

Policy H-7: Promote the rehabilitation of deteriorating or substandard residential properties.

Program H-13: Continue the citywide property maintenance, inspection, and enforcement program.

Program H-14: Enact development regulations that encourage rehabilitation of historic residential buildings, remodeling of older multifamily rental buildings and retention of smaller single-family residences.

The City has continued to utilize various public funding sources to assist with the rehabilitation and/or acquistion of existing affordable rental housing, including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, City funds and bond funds. Between 1998 and 2000 the City, in cooperation with several non-profit organizations, accomplished the following:

- Construction of the 24 unit Page Mill Court which provides permanent, affordable rental housing for persons with developmental disabilities and whose incomes are less than 30% of County median income.
- Preservation and rehabilitation of the 57 unit Sheridan Apartments which was at-risk of converting to market rate housing. Sheridan Apartments provides subsidized housing for seniors and persons with disabilities. The units were acquired by the Palo Alto Housing Corporation with assistance from the City.
- Preservation and rehabilitation of the 156 unit Palo Alto Gardens Apartments which was at-risk of converting to market rate housing. The Palo Alto Gardens provides subsidized housing for seniors and families. The units were acquired by the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition with assistance from the City.
- Rehabilitation of the water system for the 66 unit Arastradero Park Apartments. New water lines were provided for each unit under this project.
- Re-roofing Building "A" which contains 59 units of the 120 unit Stevenson House which provides housing for low-income seniors.

The City is continuing its citywide property maintenance, inspection, and enforcement program and provides rehabilitation assistance on an "as needed" basis for units occupied by very low- and low-income homeowners. Revised development regulations that encourage rehabilitation of historic residential buildings, remodeling of older multifamily rental buildings, and the retention of smaller single family dwellings have not yet been established but are being considered under the Zoning Ordinance Update. Draft revised Zoning Ordinance standards will be proposed in 2004.

Policy H-8: Maintain the number of multifamily rental housing units in Palo Alto at no less than its current level while supporting efforts to increase the rental supply.

Program H-15: Continue implementation of the Condominium Conversion Ordinance.

Program H-16: Where a proposed subdivision or condominium would cause a loss of rental housing, grant approval only if at least two of the following three circumstances exist:

- *The project will produce at least a 100 percent increase in the number of units currently on the site and will comply with the City's Below Market Rate (BMR) program (described in Program H-20); and/or*
- *The number of rental units to be provided on the site is at least equal to the number of existing rental units; and/or*
- *No less than 20 percent of the units will comply with the City's BMR program.*

No multifamily units were lost during the 1998-2003 Housing Element timeframe. As indicated by the preservation of the Palo Alto Gardens and the Sheridan Apartments, Palo Alto continues to act to preserve its existing supply of affordable multiple-family housing. In 1974, the City adopted a Condominium Conversion Ordinance (Chapter 21.40 of the Palo Alto Municipal Code), which regulates the conversion of rental apartments condominiums for projects containing three or more units. An application for conversion can be considered only if there is a citywide rental vacancy rate that exceeds three percent, or regardless of vacancy rate, if:

- One below market rate unit is provided for every two-market rate units to be converted.
- The tenants of at least two-thirds of the rental units consent to this conversion.

Between 1998-2000, no rental units were converted to ownership units under the provisions of this ordinance. The City intends to continue to regulate the potential conversion of rental units by continuing to implement the Condominium Conversion Ordinance.

Policy H-9: Encourage community involvement in the maintenance and enhancement of public and private properties and adjacent rights-of-way in residential neighborhoods.

Program H-17: Create community volunteer days and park cleanups, plantings, or similar events that promote neighborhood enhancement.

Program H-18: Conduct City-sponsored cleanup campaigns for public and private properties.

The City continues to encourage community involvement in the maintenance of public and private properties and adjacent rights-of-way as is evidenced by the exemplary condition of buildings and improvements in the vast majority of the City.

Policy H-10: Encourage and foster diverse housing opportunities for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Palo Alto continues to encourage diverse housing opportunities for very low-, low- and moderate-income households by preserving existing affordable housing, as in the case of the Palo Alto Gardens and Sheridan Apartments, and by identifying new sites for multiple-family housing. However, the City has been restricted in the provision of housing opportunities due to the limited amount of land available for multiple-family housing. That is why the updated Housing Element calls for aggressive implementation of the Housing Opportunities Study to provide more sites suitable for this type of housing in locations that support the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, including housing sites that support transit use and the creation of pedestrian oriented environments.

Policy H-11: Provide for increased use and support of tenant/landlord educational and mediation opportunities.

Program H-19: Implement the "Action Plan" of the City of Palo Alto's Consolidated Plan or its successor documents.

Program H-20: Continue implementation of the City's "Below Market Rate" (BMR) Inclusionary Housing Program that requires at least ten percent of all housing units built in for-sale projects of three units or more and rental projects of five units or more to be provided at below market rates to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Program H-21: Adopt a revised density bonus program that allows the construction of up to three additional market rate units for each BMR unit above that normally required, up to a maximum zoning increase of 25 percent in density. Allow an equivalent increase in square footage (Floor Area Ratio) for projects that meet this requirement.

Program H-22: Recognize the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park as providing low-, and moderate-income housing opportunities.

During the last two years of the City's ***Consolidated Plan***, the City helped to create 131 new units of affordable rental housing in the Alma Place and Page Mill Court projects and preserved 213 units of affordable rental housing in the Palo Alto Gardens and Sheridan Apartments. The City also contributed funds to help accomplish the following over the life of the 1995-2000 ***Consolidated Plan***:

- Construction of the New County Children's Shelter, a 76,000-sq. ft. facility in San Jose designed to serve 3,900 abused and/or neglected children from Santa Clara County.
- Renovation of the Casa Say Youth Shelter in Mountain View – short-term shelter for runaways or at-risk adolescents.
- Installation of safety improvements for Stevenson House and Lytton Gardens both of which are senior residential facilities.
- Construction of the 250-bed regional homeless reception center in San Jose operated by the Emergency Housing Consortium.
- Acquisition of a shared transitional home (Margarita Street House) for low-income veterans in conjunction with the Veterans Workshop.

Between 1998 and 2000 the City added 5 new BMR rental units and 7 new BMR ownership units under its Below Market Rate program but this level of production is very low compared to the City's need for housing affordable to lower- and moderate-income households. That is why the revised Housing Element calls for increasing the minimum number of BMR units from 10% to 15% of the total number of units in new residential projects under 5 acres and from 15% to 20% for projects over 5 acres.

Although the revised density bonus program called for in Program H-21 has not yet been codified, it will be implemented through the Zoning Ordinance Update. The program (now Program H-37) has been modified as part of the updated Housing Element to allow a density bonus of up to 50%.

The City has adopted a Mobile Home Conversion Ordinance to help preserve the Buena Vista Mobile Home Park.

Policy H-12: Support agencies and organizations that provide shelter, housing, and related services to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households.

Program H-23: Promote legislative changes and funding for programs that facilitate and subsidize the acquisition, rehabilitation, and operation of existing rental housing by housing assistance organizations, nonprofit developers, and for-profit developers.

Program H-24: Use existing agency programs such as Senior Home Repair to provide rehabilitation assistance to very low- and low-income households.

Program H-25: Support the preservation of existing group homes and supported living facilities for persons with special housing needs. Assist local agencies and nonprofit organizations in the construction or rehabilitation of new facilities for this population.

Palo Alto continued its efforts to support agencies and organizations that provide shelter and other services during the 1998-2000 time period. In addition to the contributions mentioned under Policy H-11 above, the City also assisted in the acquisition and rehabilitation of the Palo Alto Gardens and Sheridan Apartments. No new home repairs were conducted under the Senior Home Repair Program between 1998-2000.

Policy H-13: Pursue funding for the construction or rehabilitation of housing that is affordable to very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. Support financing techniques such as land banking, federal and state tax credits, mortgage revenue bonds, and mortgage credit certificates to subsidize the cost of housing.

Program H-26: Maintain a high priority for the acquisition of new housing sites, acquisition and rehabilitation of existing housing, and housing-related services in the allocation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds or similar programs.

Program H-27: Support and expand the City's Housing Development Fund or successor program.

Program H-28: On an on-going basis, seek funding from state and federal programs, such as the HOME program and HUD Section 202 and 811 (or successor programs), to support the development or rehabilitation of housing for very low-, low-, or moderate-income households.

Program H-29: Continue to require developers of employment-generating commercial and industrial developments to contribute to the supply of low- and moderate-income housing.

As described in earlier discussions, the City has used every means at its disposal to pursue funding for the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing, such as the use of CDBG funds to help acquire and rehabilitate projects, such as the Palo Alto Gardens and Sheridan Apartments. The City will continue to pursue funding of all types that will help the City maintain or construct affordable housing although the competition is very severe and many of the evaluation criteria used for programs, such as HOME, do not favor communities like Palo Alto. The City is also aware that it must try to generate its own funding resources to produce housing. In particular, the City has acknowledged that the commercial and industrial housing in-lieu fee of $4.21/square foot for projects with impacts on housing has not kept pace with the rapid increase in the demand for and cost of new housing generated by new employment and, as a result, adopted a new fee of $15.00/square foot. The updated Housing Element calls for a continuous evaluation of and adjustments to the commercial and industrial housing in-lieu fee to ensure it reflects the impact of commercial and industrial development on housing needs.

Policy H-14: Encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, and construction of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) hotels and SRO housing.

The 107 unit Alma Place SRO was constructed in Palo Alto in 1998 and is evidence of the City's continued commitment to create and preserve SRO housing opportunities. The facility is designed to serve very low- income persons.

Policy H-15: Support opportunities for Shared Housing and other innovative housing forms to promote diversity and meet the needs of different household types and income levels.

To date, the City has not developed any new policies or programs to support Shared Housing. This issue will, however, be considered during the Zoning Ordinance Update currently underway.

Policy H-16: Support housing that incorporates facilities and services to meet the health care, transit, or social service needs of households with special needs, including seniors and persons with disabilities.

Policy H-17: Support family housing that addresses resident needs for childcare, youth services, recreation opportunities and access to transit.

During 1998-2000, the City assisted in the acquisition, preservation and rehabilitation of the Palo Alto Gardens Apartments and the Sheridan Apartments, both of which provide housing for seniors. Palo Alto Gardens also contains units for families. The City also contributed to the rehabilitation of the water system of the Arastradero Park Apartments, which serves 66 families. Since there are not many housing projects that incorporate facilities and services that might be needed by their residents, the City has used its funds to improve community facilities that are likely to be used by those occupying affordable housing projects throughout the City. City funds have been used to improve Rinconada Park to make it more accessible to people with disabilities and to provide playground equipment and play area renovations for the Peninsula Children's Center, which serves children with emotional and behavioral disabilities. Repairs have been made to the Ventura Community Center, which serves a low-income area. Improvements have also been made to the Community Association for Rehabilitation/Swim Center, which provides warm water therapeutic swim opportunities for seniors and persons with disabilities. Although the City will continue to support housing that incorporate facilities and services needed by special populations, it will also continue to provide support for such facilities outside of housing projects.

Policy H-18: Support legislation, regulatory changes, federal funding, and local efforts for the permanent preservation of HUD-assisted very low- and low-income units at risk of conversion to market rate housing or loss of federal rental assistance.

The City continues to support HUD programs, such as the Section 8 rental assistance program, and will continue to monitor federal legislation and regulatory changes to determine if and when to take aggressive action to ensure retention of these affordable housing units.

Policy H-19: Support the provision of emergency shelter, transitional housing and ancillary services to address homelessness.

As indicated above, the City has participated in supporting homeless shelters and service facilities in the County as well as allowing smaller temporary shelters (Hotel de Zink) in the City itself. This may not be enough to meet the needs of the homeless in Palo Alto, which may number as high as 125 people. That is why the updated Housing Element calls for the City to allow homeless shelters with a conditional use permit in the CS and CD commercial zoning districts and in the industrial zoning districts.

Policy H-20: Provide leadership in addressing homelessness as a regional issue.

Policy H-21: Work closely with appropriate agencies in the region to develop and implement policies and programs relating to homelessness.

Program H-30: Continue to participate in the Santa Clara County Homeless Collaborative as well as work with adjacent jurisdictions to develop additional shelter opportunities.

Program H-31: Continue to participate with and support agencies addressing homelessness.

Palo Alto has continued to actively participate with other jurisdictions in seeking solutions to the problems of the homeless in Santa Clara County. The City continues to believe that homelessness is a regional issue and that it must be addressed on that basis. That is why the City has contributed funds to so many homeless shelters and service facilities outside of its jurisdiction as well as inside. The City will continue to take a leadership role and actively participate with other communities to address homelessness.

Policy H-22: Support programs and agencies that seek to eliminate housing discrimination.

Program H-32: Work with appropriate state and federal agencies to ensure that fair housing laws are enforced.

Program H-33: Continue to support groups that provide fair housing services, such as Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing.

Program H-34: Continue the efforts of the Human Relations Commission to combat discrimination in rental housing, including mediation of problems between landlords and tenants.

Program H-35: Continue implementation of the City's Ordinances prohibiting discrimination in renting or leasing housing based on age, parenthood, pregnancy or the potential or actual presence of a minor child.

During 1998-2000, the City continued to work towards elimination of discriminatory activities in all aspects of housing. The City has annually allocated CDBG funds to Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing to provide services to promote fair housing, including complaint investigation, counseling and advocacy. The City also contracts with Project Sentinel to provide tenant/landlord information, referral and mediation services. CDBG funds have been used to support ombudsman activities to assist with complaints related to elderly residents living in nursing homes in the City. The City has also sponsored community meetings and forums to discuss the need for housing for people with special needs and provided publications that helped seniors and others to access housing. The City intends to continue these types of activities in the 1999-2006 time period.

Policy H-23: Reduce the cost of housing by promoting energy efficiency, resource management, and conservation for new and existing housing.

Program H-36: Continue providing staff support and technical assistance in energy conservation and demand management to architects, developers, and utility customers.

The City of Palo Alto is fortunate to own and manage its water, gas, wastewater and electric utility systems. Conservation of these resources is a high priority for the City. The City has a full time staff person who provides assistance with water and energy conservation. The "Residential Energy Auditor" works primarily with existing residential occupants and helps to evaluate their energy/water use and make recommendations for more efficient operations. Further, this staff person is available to work with developers or architects of new construction projects to design energy conservation features during the planning stages of the project. The City also offers on a promotional basis, programs that offer rebates for more efficient refrigerators or the use of energy efficient fluorescent lighting supplies.

In 1993, the City created the Utilities Residential Rate Assistance Program (RAP) to provide rate relief to residents who lack adequate financial resources to pay utility bills. Level of income and disability are used to determine if a household qualifies for the program. Qualifying residents currently receive a 20% discount on their utility bills. In May 2001, the City Council expanded the reach of the RAP to allow three times more residents to qualify for the program than were allowed previously.

Progress in Meeting Previous Housing Needs

ABAG originally projected that the City of Palo Alto needed to provide sufficient land to accommodate 1,809 new housing units between 1988 and 1995. This total was revised downward to 1,597 units for 1990-1995 to account for the City's housing production for the years 1988-1990. This revised housing need by household income level is described in the table below and became the housing production goals of the 1998-2003 Housing Element.

Illustration #26: Palo Alto's Fair Share of the Region's Housing Need by Income Level, 1990-1998

Household Income Level (% of County Median Income)	Number of Units Needed
Very Low (0-50%)	338
Low (51-80%)	232
Moderate (81-120%)	347
Above Moderate (121% and above)	680
Total	**1,597**

The table below updates the progress the City made in meeting its fair share of the region's housing needs from 1990-1998.

Illustration #27: Progress in Meeting Palo Alto's Fair Share of the Region's Housing Need by Income Level, 1990-1998

Income Level	1990-2003 Need	1990-1998 Production	Unmet Need
Very Low	338	169	169
Low	232	24	208
Moderate	347	53	294
Above Moderate	680	384	296
Total	**1,597**	**630**	**967**

As can be seen from the table above, between January 1, 1990 to December 31, 1998, 630 units were built in the City of Palo Alto, about 39% of the City's fair share of the region's housing need for that period. Of these units, 270 were affordable to very low-, low-, and moderate income households. This constituted about 27% of the City's 917 unit affordable housing need for 1990-2003. The City was more successful in producing units affordable to households with above moderate incomes and provided 56% of the units needed for this income level. However, overall production of housing was very low, only 70 units per year, for the 1990-1998 timeframe.

Although significant progress was made in the production of very low-income units with over half the goal (57%) met (this includes the constructon of the 107 unit Alma Place SRO and the 24 unit Page Mill Court project for the disabled), considerably less progress was

made in the low- and moderate-income categories where, respectively, only 10% and 15% of the need was met. It is clear that the City was not very effective at producing affordable housing during most of the 1990s. This was recognized during the 1998-2010 Comprehensive Plan update and the creation of the 1998-2003 Housing Element in which a series of policy and program changes were adopted to increase the supply of affordable housing. Most of these proposed changes, however, have not yet been fully implemented so the effectiveness of these new policies and programs cannot be completely evaluated. It should also be noted that other factors beyond the control of the City, such as increases in land and construction costs, may have also contributed to depressing the production of affordable housing.

The City had more success in preserving units that were "at risk" of converting to market rate housing during 1998-2000 with the preservation of the 156 unit Palo Alto Gardens Apartments and the 57 units Sheridan Apartments. The City assisted in the acquisition of these units with financial and technical assistance and the units continue to be used as housing affordable to lower income households.

Effectiveness of 1998-2003 Housing Element and Implications for 1999-2006 Housing Element

As the information on the previous pages demonstrates, the City of Palo Alto has been active in encouraging and supporting the development and preservation of housing, especially affordable housing. From 1990-2000, there were 26 "Below Market Rate" units added to the inventory, 86 units rehabilitated through the Rental Rehabilitation Program and 5 units rehabilitated with CDBG assistance. The City assisted non-profit owners in the acquisition and rehabilitation of the Palo Alto Gardens and the Sheridan Apartments. Lytton Courtyard and Alma Place SRO were constructed during this time period. In addition, the City provided considerable technical and financial support to non-profit agencies providing housing related support services such as homeless assistance, shared housing, fair housing information and mediation services and senior home repair programs.

For the 1999-2006 time frame, the City will continue the general direction of the 1998-2003 Housing Element but will place greater emphasis on increasing the potential supply of affordable housing by increasing densities on some sites and more aggressively searching for non-residential sites to convert to residential use, or mixed use with a minimum residential component, through the Housing Opportunities Study. New construction projects will continue to be required to include affordable units/in-lieu fees but at higher rates than previously and the preservation of existing units will continue to be encouraged and monitored. The City will continue to support the work of non-profit groups and agencies in providing affordable housing opportunities. With limited land and development opportunities in the future, however, the City will review its existing housing programs and ordinances to ensure that the maximum number of affordable housing opportunities are provided and new development standards are created that allow the maximum potential development to occur and that clarify residential density ranges to ensure that a minimum

level of residential development is achieved and the limited supply of residential land is used efficiently. The City will place an increased emphasis on expanding the opportunities for residential development in commercial, industrial or other areas not traditionally considered for residential use. The City will continue to emphasize the importance of maintaining the existing diversity of the housing stock in terms of rental and multifamily units and in supporting the opportunities for households of all income levels to have access to affordable housing. A regular monitoring system will be established to ensure that the City is moving towards meeting its goals. Commercial and industrial development will be asked to contribute a fair share of its resources to the production of affordable housing to at least partially offset the impact on housing demand and costs generated by new jobs.

Appendix Materials

A. *Reprint of the* **Housing Sites Inventory**
B. *Table of* **Subsidized Rental Housing Developments**
C. *Table of* **Summary of Below Market Rate (BMR) Units**
D. *Table of* **Housing Units Built and Housing Units with Approved Building Permits, January 1, 1999 – December 31, 2000**
E. *Individual Site Descriptions and Development Potential of* **Housing Sites Inventory**
F. *Table of* **Additional Potential Longer Term Housing Sites**
G. *Acknowledgements of* **Resource Persons Contacted During Preparation of the 1999-2006 Housing Element**
H. **Bibliography**

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9/25/02

APPENDIX A

Housing Sites Inventory

Site No.	Site Address	Description	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Site Size in Acres	Minimum Dwelling Unit Yield *
5-01	Bryant, Channing & Ramona	Oak Court (SOFA affordable housing)	AMF	AMF	1.23	53
5-06	800 High St.	Peninsula Creamery site	CD-S(P)	PC pending (61 units requested)	0.96	26
5-21	657-663 Alma St. (north corner of Alma St. and Forest Ave.)	Former Craft and Floral building	CD-C(P) CD-S(P)	Mixed Use	0.48	10
5-28	33, 39 & 45 Encina Ave. near El Camino Real	Proposed Opportunity Center	CS	PC pending (90 units requested)	0.43	90
5-30	841 Alma St.	Power substation	PF	TBD	0.36	10
5-31	901-925 High St.	Auto storage/parking	CD-S(P)	Mixed Use (application pending for 12 units)	0.46	10
8-06	2650 Birch St. at Sheridan Ave.	2 vacant lots and 4 houses	RM-40	RM-40	0.57	15
8-09(a)	2701 El Camino Real	Former Greenworld Nursery	RM-40, CN	RM-40 or Mixed Use	0.98	30
8-09(b)	2755 El Camino Real	VTA Park & Ride Lot	PF	RM-40	0.48	15
8-11	E. side Sheridan Ave. btwn. SPRR and Park Blvd.	Underutilized industrial bldgs.; portion of Page Mill Rd. r.o.w.	GM(B)	RM-40	3.92	120
10-02	901 San Antonio Rd.	Former Sun Microsystems/ Future JCC	GM	Mixed Use	6.5 acres of 12.92 acre site	200
12-01	4102 El Camino Real at Vista	Former Blockbusters	RM-30	RM-30	0.65	9
12-06	4219 El Camino Real	Hyatt Rickey's Hotel	CS(H)	CS(H) (application pending for 302 units)	7.5 acres of 15.98 acre site	120
12-07	4249 El Camino Real	Elk's Lodge	RM-30, RM-15, R-1	RM-30, RM-15, R-1	8.08	97
12-09	4146 El Camino Real	Vacant	RM-15	RM-15	0.77	5
12-11	3445 Alma St.	Alma Plaza	PC	PC pending (10 units requested)	1 acre of 4.21 acre site	8
Total						**818**

**New state legislation (AB2292)requires compensating changes in the inventory if fewer units are permitted on a site. A larger number of units may be approved on any site when consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, zoning and state law.*

APPENDIX B

Subsidized Rental Housing Developments (September 2000)

Project	Date	Total	Subs.	Type
Stevenson House, 455 East Charleston	1968	120	120	Seniors
Colorado Park, 1441 Colorado Ave.	1972	60	60	Families & Seniors (17 Section 8 units)
Palo Alto Gardens, 648 San Antonio Rd.	1973/pres. 1999	156	156	Families & Seniors (128 units)
Arastradero Park, 574 Arastradero Rd.	1974/pres. 1995	66	66	Families & Seniors (47 Section 8 units)
Lytton Gardens I, 656 Lytton Ave.	1975	218	218	Seniors
Webster Wood, 941 Webster Street	1978	68	41	Families (4 units) Handicapped (4 units)
Lytton Gardens II, 656 Lytton Ave.	1979	100	100	Seniors (50 Independent Living; 50 Reseidential Care)
Sheridan Apts, 360 Sheridan Ave.	1979/pres. 1998	57	57	Seniors, Handicapped
Pine St. Shared Lvg House, 1259 Pine Street	1981	1	1	Families
Elm Apts, 129 Emerson St.	1982	11	11	Families
Terman Apts, 655 Arastradero Rd.	1985	92	72	Families & Seniors (72 Section 8 units)
Ferne Apts, 101-131 Ferne Ave.	1984	16	10	Families (6 Section 8 units)
Emerson South, 3067 Emerson St.	1985	6	6	Small Families/Single Adults
Curtner Apts., 300-310 Curtner Ave.	1986	9	9	Families (9 Section 8units)
Waldo Apts., 3039 Emerson St.	1987	6	3	Families (3 Section 8 units)
California Park Apt., 2301 Park Blvd.	1989	45	45	Families, Handicapped (1 unit)
Oak Manor Apartments, 630 Los Roblesd	1991	33	23	Families (23 Section 8 units)
Plum Tree Apts., 3020 Emerson St.	1991	10	10	Families
Lytton IV (Courtyard), 330 Everett Ave.	1994	51	51	Seniors
Barker Hotel, 439 Emerson St.	1994	26	26	Adults/Handicapped (5 units)
Emerson North, 3051-3061 Emerson St.	1994	6	6	Small Families & Seniors (1 Section 8 unit)
Emerson House, 330 Emerson St.	1996	4	4	Small Families, Handicapped & Seniors
Ventura Apts., 290-310 Ventura Ave.	1997	12	7	Families
Alma Place SRO, 753 Alma St.	1998	107	107	Single Adults/Handicapped
Page Mill Court, 2700 Ash	1998	24	24	Adults with Developmental Disabilities
TOTALS		**1,304**	**1,233**	

APPENDIX C

Summary of Below Market Rate Program Units (June 2000)

Development	Year Initial of Sale/Rent	Number of Units
BMR Purchase Units		
Foothill Green	1975	4
Villas de San Alma	1975	8
Greenhouse I	1975, 1983, 1987	14
Greenhouse II	1976	10
Channing Place	1976	2
410 Sheridan	1977	5
Villas de la Plazas	1978	4
Vista Townhouses	1979	2
San Antonio Village	1979	2
Barron Square	1979	6
Palo Alto Greens	1981	4
Colorado Place	1981	2
Palo Alto Redwoods	2983	12
Cedar Terrace (Oregon Green Offsite)	1984	1
Birch Court - BMR	1984	5
Palo Alto Central	1984	7
Loma Verde Village	1985	4
Loma Verde Townhomes	1985	2
Channing Court	1985	1
Ashby Duplex	1985	2
Abitare	1985	9
Ortega Duplex	1986	2
Talisman Duplex	1987	2
Bautista Duplex	1987	2
The Hamlet	1988	6
Terrace Bay Homes	1988	2
The Rosewalk	1988	4
Ramona Courts	1989	1
Charleston Village	1990	2
737 Loma Verde (Christensen Court)	1992	1
Camino Place	1992	4
Spanish Villas	1993	1
Jacobs Court	1993	3
Promenade	1994	7
Everett Townhome	1997	1
Silverwood	1999	3
Classics	2000	4
TOTAL OWNERSHIP UNITS		**151**
BMR Rental Units		
Southwood Apartment Homes	1985	10
1100 Welch Road Apartments	1987	11
Mayfield Apartment - 345 Sheridan	1987	9
Mayfield Apartment - 345 Sheridan	1987	3
Montage Apartments	1998	5
TOTAL RENTAL UNITS		**38**

APPENDIX D

Housing Units Built and Housing Units with Approved Building Permits, January 1, 1999 – December 31, 2002

Income Level	Project Name/Address	Number of units
Units Built: Jan. 1, 1999 – Dec. 31, 2002		
Very Low Income	Page Mill Court Apartments	24
Subtotal		*24*
Low Income	Stanford West	63
	435 Sheridan	3
Subtotal		*66*
Moderate Income	Silverwood	3
	Classics	4
	Cottages	15
Subtotal		*22*
Above Moderate Income	Stanford West	565
	435 Sheridan	32
	2825 ECR	3
	Colorado/San Carlos Subd.	4
	SOFA I	30
	Various	138
Subtotal		*772*
Total Built Units		***884***
Units with Approved Building Permits Jan. 1, 2001 – Dec. 31, 2002		
Very Low Income		0
Subtotal		*0*
Low Income		0
Subtotal		*0*
Moderate Income	Cottages	2
Subtotal		*2*
Above Moderate Income	Glenbrook Subdivision	14
	4131 ECR	8
	SOFA Condominium Projects	66
Subtotal		*88*
Total Units with Approved Building Permits		***90***
Grand Total		**974**

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 5-01

Site Name: Oak Court

Site Address(es): 845 Ramona between Channing and Bryant

Site Size: 1.23 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 6 parcels, 1 owner (City of Palo Alto)

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MISP – Major Institution/Special Facilities.

Existing Zoning: AMF conforming to SOFA Coordinated Area Plan

Proposed Zoning: Same as above.

Existing Uses: Vacant land.

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Site has been cleared to accommodate this new development. The Director of Planning approved a 53-unit affordable housing development in December in 2001 after recommendation by the City's Architectural Review Board.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by three local streets with good pedestrian access and is within 2,000 feet of a transit station. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: Development application approved for 53 affordable multifamily units; non-profit developer is currently seeking housing subsidies.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: The project will include a total of 53 multifamily units, all affordable apartments in a 3-4 story building.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: Proposed apartments compatible with existing mix of residential and commercial uses in the area. During the development review process, the neighborhood strongly supported the project.

APPENDIX E

INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 5-06

Site Name: Peninsula Creamery site

Site Address(es): 800 High St. between Homer and Channing Streets

Site Size: 0.96 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 3 parcels, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: Service Commercial

Existing Zoning: CD-S – Commercial Downtown Service

Proposed Zoning: PC – Planned Community (application pending)

Existing Uses: Various vacated quasi-industrial/manufacturing (creamery) buildings, truck loading and storage areas

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Buildings, storage, and loading areas are in poor condition and need extensive rehabilitation to be utilized. No significant landscaping is on the site.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by three local streets with good pedestrian access and is within approximately 2,000 feet of a transit corridor hub providing train, shuttle and bus service. The site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: The site is clearly underutilized and the quasi-industrial use is not compatible with the City's vision for its Downtown and is ready for replacement. The site is nearly one acre in size, which would be easier to redevelop than smaller sites in the area. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment. The City is currently considering a proposed rezoning of the site to allow 26-61 condominiums on site.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Proposed rezoning is for 26-61 dwelling units, all condominiums (3 stories of apartments over parking).

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: Proposed apartments should be compatible with existing mix of residential and neighborhood-serving commercial uses in the area if the development is sensitively designed and integrated with the existing neighborhood.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 5-21

Site Name: Former Craft and Floral building

Site Address(es): 657-663 Alma St. (north corner of Alma St. and Forest Ave.)

Site Size: 0.48 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 2 parcels, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: CS – Service Commercial. No Comprehensive Plan Change required to allow residential or mixed use.

Existing Zoning: CD-S – Commercial Downtown Service; CD-C – Commercial Downtown Community

Proposed Zoning: Mixed Use

Existing Uses: Vacant retail commercial building and parking lot.

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Building and parking lot are in fair to good condition but have been vacant for over a decade and are nearing the end of their economic life. No significant landscaping is on the site.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one major thoroughfare and one local street with good pedestrian access and is within 2,000 feet of a transit station. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: The existing retail building has been vacant for over one decade. The site's Downtown location indicates that mixed use would be appropriate. Site suitable for maximum height construction limits per the Alma Street Design Guidelines. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Maximum density of 25 DU/AC anticipated. Potential yield would be 10-12 apartments over retail commercial space.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: Proposed apartments may be compatible with existing mix of residential and commercial uses in the area but conflicts could arise between residential and non-residential uses.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 5-28

Site Name: Future Opportunity Center site

Site Address(es): 33, 39 and 45 Encina Ave. near El Camino Real

Site Size: 0.43 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 3 parcels, 2 owners.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: CS – Service Commercial. No Comprehensive Plan Change required to allow residential or mixed use.

Existing Zoning: CS – Service Commercial

Proposed Zoning: PC – Planned Community (application pending)

Existing Uses: Vacant commercial building

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Older commercial buildings in an industrial/manufacturing area. Buildings are in fair condition but are nearing the end of their economic life.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one local street with good pedestrian access and is within 2,000 feet of a transit station and is close to a transit corridor served by buses. Site is close to existing jobs. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area. With the completion of the Homer Avenue CalTrain undercrossing in 2003, the site will have adequate access to schools, parks and libraries.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: A development application for a PC zoning to allow a homeless service center and 90 Single Room Occupancy (SRO) and family housing units for the site is anticipated to be submitted in the Summer of 2002. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment. Zoning process is expected to be completed by spring of 2003.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Probable yield would be 90 SRO and family units over a homeless service center of about 9,200 square feet in a five-story building.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: The homeless service center and housing units are compatible with existing commercial and medical uses in the area.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 5-30

Site Name: City Power Plant Substation

Site Address(es): 841 Alma Street between Homer and Channing

Site Size: 0.36 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 1 parcel, 1 owner (City of Palo Alto Utilities)

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MISP – Major Institutional/Special Facilities

Existing Zoning: PF – Public Facilities District

Proposed Zoning: To be determined during the SOFA II Planning process

Existing Uses: Power Substation

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: The site is currently used for an electric power plant substation by the City Utility Department, but the Utility Department is considering relocating the power plant to another site for efficiency reasons.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: The site is served by one major thoroughfare with good pedestrian access and within approximately 2,000 feet of a transit corridor hub providing train, shuttle and bus service. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area. The site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. The site is infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: If the site is determined to be surplus, the only impediment to redevelopment could be from the existing utility use site clean up.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Although a zoning district for the site has not been proposed, it is anticipated that 10-20 multi-family units could be accommodated on the site.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: Multi-family residential use of the property would be compatible with the existing and planned mix of residential and commercial development in the area.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 5-31

Site Name: N/A

Site Address(es): 901-925 High Street

Site Size: 0.46 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 2 parcels; 1 owner

Comprehensive Plan Designation: CS – Commercial Service

Existing Zoning: CD-S(P)

Proposed Zoning: Mixed Use

Existing Uses: Auto storage and parking

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: The site unimproved.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: The site is served by three local streets and near one major thoroughfare. It has good pedestrian access and is within 2,000 feet of a transit station hub providing train, shuttle and bus service. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area. The site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: The site is clearly underutilized and the existing use is not compatible with the City's vision for its Downtown. The City is currently considering a proposed rezoning of the site to allow ten apartments on the site.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Proposed rezoning would allow a mixed use project with groundfloor commercial and twelve apartment units in a two-story structure.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: A mixed-use development including twelve units would be compatible with the existing and planned commercial and residential uses in the area.

APPENDIX E

HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 8-06

Site Name: N/A

Site Address(es): 2650 Birch St. at Sheridan Ave.

Site Size: 0.57 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 6 parcels, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MF – Multiple Family Residential.

Existing Zoning: RM-40

Proposed Zoning: RM-40

Existing Uses: 2 vacant lots and 4 single family houses.

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Houses are in fair condition and are currently being rented. Several large trees located on the site. The site is level and would be easy to redevelop.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one major thoroughfare and three local streets with good pedestrian access and is within 2,000 feet of a transit station. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: The existing vacant lots have been vacant for many years. Existing homes are over 40 years old and need some maintenance work. The site is surrounded by office and commercial uses and is suited for higher intensity development than currently exists. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Maximum density of 40 DU/AC anticipated. The potential yield would be 15-20 apartments.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: A multi-story apartment complex would be compatible with existing mix of commercial and office uses.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 8-09(a)

Site Name: Greenworld Nursery

Site Address(es): 2701 El Camino Real at Sheridan Avenue

Site Size: 0.98 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 1 parcel, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MF – Multiple Family Residential.

Existing Zoning: RM-40, CN

Proposed Zoning: RM-40 or Mixed Use

Existing Uses: Operating, small scale nursery; rear two-thirds of site vacant.

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Site is vacant. Several large trees located on site. Site is level and would be easy to redevelop.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one major thoroughfare and one local street with good pedestrian access, is within 2,000 feet of a transit station, and adjacent to a transit corridor with major bus service. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: Site is vacant and ripe for development. Site is near a major, key intersection in Palo Alto (El Camino Real and Page Mill Road) and would be very attractive for more intensive development. The site is currently for sale and is being marketed for housing although mixed use would also be appropriate. Site could be combined with Site 8-09(b) and jointly developed.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Maximum density of 40 DU/AC anticipated. Potential yield would be 30-35 apartments in a 3-4 story building.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: A multi-story apartment or mixed use complex would be compatible with existing mix of commercial and office uses.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 8-09(b)

Site Name: VTA Park and Ride Lot

Site Address(es): 2755 El Camino Real at Page Mill Road

Site Size: 0.48 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 1 parcel, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MISP – Major Institution/Special Facilities.

Existing Zoning: PF – Public Facilities

Proposed Zoning: RM-40

Existing Uses: Small parking lot operated by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA).

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Parking lot is relatively new and in good condition. Perimeter landscaping exists.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by two major thoroughfares with good pedestrian access, is within 2,000 feet of a transit station, and adjacent to a transit corridor with major bus service. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: Although the site is completely occupied by the parking lot, there is an opportunity for building housing over the parking lot. The VTA has allowed joint development of such facilities in the past as a method of supporting transit use. Site is near a major, key intersection in Palo Alto (El Camino Real and Page Mill Road) and would be very attractive for more intensive development. The City believes the site is ideal for joint development and will be working with VTA on this matter. Site could be combined with Site 8-09(a) and jointly developed.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Maximum density of 40 DU/AC anticipated. Potential yield would be 15-18 apartments in a 3-4 story building.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: A multi-story apartment or mixed use complex would be compatible with existing mix of commercial and office uses.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 8-11

Site Name: N/A

Site Address(es): East side Sheridan Ave. between SPRR and Park Blvd.

Site Size: 3.92 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 4 parcels and portion of public right-of-way, 5 owners.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: Light Industrial. No Comprehensive Plan Change required to allow residential use.

Existing Zoning: GM – General Manufacturing

Proposed Zoning: RM-40

Existing Uses: Underutilized or vacant industrial buildings and sites.

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Existing structures are over 40 years old and nearing the end of their economic life. Minimal landscaping is provided on site. Little or no recent investment made in site improvements. Site is partly vacant and underutilized containing very low intensity and marginal industrial uses.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one major thoroughfare and one local street with good pedestrian access and is within 2,000 feet of a transit station. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: This site represents a major opportunity for reuse especially if the existing parcels and public right-of-way can be combined. Site is close to other major transportation facilities besides those adjacent to it and may be eligible for MTC funding for Transit Oriented Development. Ratio of value of improvements to value of land is low indicating that market pressures should lead to redevelopment of this site in near future.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Maximum density of 40 DU/AC anticipated. Potential yield would be 120-150 apartments in a series of 3-4 story buildings.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: A multi-story apartment complex would be compatible with existing mix of commercial, office and industrial uses.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 10-02

Site Name: Former Sun Microsystems

Site Address(es): 901 San Antonio Rd. near Bayshore Highway

Site Size: total - 12.92 acres; area likely to be reused - 7.5-8.0 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 4 parcels, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: LI – Light Industrial. No Comprehensive Plan change is required to allow residential use.

Existing Zoning: GM – General Manufacturing

Proposed Zoning: RM-40

Existing Uses: Large vacant office building and large parking lot

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Existing structure, parking lot and landscaping in good condition. Sun Microsystems vacated the site recently due to the downturn in the high technology sector of the economy.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by three major thoroughfares with good pedestrian access but no access to significant transit facilities although bus service is provided. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: A property transaction between Sun Microsystems and the Jewish Community Center organization is in escrow. A portion of the site is to be used for a new Community Center in conjunction with a senior assisted-living facility. The remaining 4 acres of the site will be developed by Bridge Housing for a 200-330 unit multi-family condominium development. Eventually the entire site will be cleared and redeveloped. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment. Once the property is acquired by the JCC, it is anticipated that redevelopment of the site will be imminent.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: 100-230 units of multi-family "attainable" housing on approximately 4 acres and a 120,000 square foot assisted-senior facility of 100 units.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: Multi-family development and the senior facility would be compatible with each other as well as the community center and adjacent office and commercial uses in the area.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 12-01

Site Name: Former Blockbusters

Site Address(es): 4102 El Camino Real at Vista

Site Size: 0.65 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 1 parcels, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MF – Multiple Family Residential

Existing Zoning: RM-30

Proposed Zoning: RM-30

Existing Uses: Vacant with non-conforming retail commercial building onsite with parking

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Existing structure and parking lot and landscaping in good condition but building may be nearing the end of its economic life. Minimal landscaping is provided on site. Site has been vacant for over one year.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one major thoroughfare and one local street with good pedestrian access and access to transit facilities including bus service. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Redevelopment will not exceed capacity of these lines. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: Site is currently on the market for residential use. The City is considering a proposal for 9 units on the site.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Maximum density of 30 DU/AC allowed. Potential yield would be 9-15 units.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: Multi-family housing would be compatible with existing office and commercial uses in the area.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 12-06

Site Name: Hyatt Rickey's Hotel

Site Address(es): 4219 El Camino Real at Charleston Road

Site Size: Total - 15.98 acres; approximately 7.5 acres proposed to be redeveloped as multi-family housing in conjunction with hotel redevelopment.

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 3 parcels, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MF – Multiple Family Residential with a Commercial Hotel Overlay

Existing Zoning: CS (H) – Service Commercial (Hotel)

Proposed Zoning: Same as above.

Existing Uses: Hotel and supporting uses.

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Existing structures, parking lot and landscaping are in adequate condition but do not maximize the economic potential of the hotel use and the site.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by two major thoroughfares and one local street with good pedestrian access and access to a transit corridor with bus service. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: The property owner has filed a development permit application to redevelop the site. The proposed project would demolish the existing hotel and build a new hotel and conference center on site and add between up to 302 apartments and townhouses on the site. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Potential dwelling unit yield would be 120- 302 multi-family units.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: Any multi-family development on the site would need to be designed to be compatible with and minimize impacts on the adjacent single family neighborhood, which may result in development at the lower end of the density range.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 12-07

Site Name: Elk's Lodge

Site Address(es): 4249 El Camino Real

Site Size: 8.08 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 2 parcels, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MF – Multiple Family Residential

Existing Zoning: R-1 – 0.64 acres; RM-15 – 2.2 acres; RM-30 – 5.24 acres

Proposed Zoning: Same as above.

Existing Uses: Grandfathered fraternal lodge and swim and recreation center use, supporting parking lot, and subleased area occupied by childcare center occupy the site.

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Existing structures, parking lot and landscaping in fair to good condition but buildings nearing the end of their economic life.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one major thoroughfare and one local street with good pedestrian access and access to a transit corridor with bus service. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: The property is currently being offered on the market for housing in conjunction with a new Elk's Lodge. The reuse of a portion of the site will help finance Lodge activities. Large parking lot areas could easily be redeveloped but most structures on the site will have to be removed. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Potential dwelling unit yield would be: R-1 – 1 to 5 single family units on 0.64 acres; RM-15 – 13 to 33 townhouses or apartments in one or more of 2-story buildings; RM-30 – 84 to 157 apartments in a series of 2-3 story structures. Total development potential: 1-5 single-family units and 97 to 190 multifamily units

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: A new Elk's Lodge and residential complex with a mix of single family homes on Wilkie Way and 2-3 story townhouse and apartment buildings would be compatible with the existing commercial and residential uses in the area. Any new development must be sensitively designed to be compatible with the adjacent existing single family neighborhood on Wilkie Way and the site access should be accessed from El Camino.

Site Number: 12-09

Site Name: N/A

Site Address(es): 4146 El Camino Real

Site Size: 0.77 acres

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 1 parcel, 1 owner.

Comprehensive Plan Designation: MF – Multiple Family Residential

Existing Zoning: RM-15

Proposed Zoning: RM-30

Existing Uses: Vacant land

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: No improvements

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one major thoroughfare with good pedestrian access and access to a major transit corridor with bus service. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: Site is vacant and is immediately available for residential development.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Potential dwelling unit yield would be 5-10 apartments in a 2-story structure using RM-30 standards.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: A new 2-story multifamily building would be compatible with the existing residential uses in the area.

APPENDIX E
HOUSING SITE INVENTORY
INDIVIDUAL SITE DESCRIPTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Site Number: 12-11

Site Name: Alma Plaza Shopping Center

Site Address(es): 3445 Alma St.

Site Size: 4.21 acres (only small portion to be redeveloped)

Number of Parcels and Ownership: 3 parcels, 1 owner

Comprehensive Plan Designation: CN – Neighborhood Commercial. No Comprehensive Plan change is required to allow residential use.

Existing Zoning: PC – Planned Community (allowing a mixed retail/housing development)

Proposed Zoning: PC – Planned Community to allow mixed-use development

Existing Uses: Two large commercial buildings/parking, vacant lot

Status of Site and Existing Improvements: Existing structures, parking lot and landscaping in adequate condition but do not maximize the economic potential of this retail center.

Access, Infrastructure and Services Availability: Site served by one major thoroughfare and one local street with good pedestrian access but no access to major transit facilities. Site is close to existing jobs, parks, schools and libraries. This is an infill site adequately served by sewer, water and other utilities. Adequate police, fire and emergency services are available in the area.

Redevelopment and Reuse Potential: The property owner has filed an application for mixed use on the site. The proposed intensification can be accommodated on the site and provide a modest number of housing units. Single ownership allows for easy parcel assembly and redevelopment.

Potential Dwelling Unit Yield and Mix of Housing Types: Potential dwelling unit yield would be 5 single family and 5 apartments over retail commercial.

Compatibility with Adjacent Uses: A mixed-use residential/commercial development would be compatible with the existing commercial and residential uses in the area.

APPENDIX F

Additional Potential Longer Term Housing Sites

Sites Considered Suitable for Future Residential Use

Site No.	Site Address	Description
4-02	285 Quarry Rd.	Hoover Pavilion
5-02	400/430 Forest Ave. at Waverly St.	CSAA Office/Surgery Center (planned and zoned for housing; RM-40)
5-03	1093-1095 Channing Ave.	St. Alberts Church
5-04	855 El Camino Real	Town & Country Shop. Center
5-05	University Ave. Circle area	Intermodal transit Center/Red Cross
5-22	153 Hamilton Ave.	Former Fasani Carpets/Turner Martin
5-29	49 Wells Ave. at Urban Ln.	Underutilized commercial site
8-01	1795 & 1805 El Camino Real at Park Avenue	Vacant lot and fast food restaurant
8-02	2650-2780 El Camino Real at Page Mill Road	Mayfield site (planned and zoned for housing; RM-40)
8-03	N. side El Camino Real btwn. Cambridge & Sherman Aves.	City parking lots
8-04	231 Grant Ave. between Park & Birch	County Mental Health Building
8-05	2310-2500 El Camino Real (Cambridge/ California area)	2-story commercial structures
8-07	S. side Staunton St. btwn. Oxford & College Aves.	Various commercial and office buildings
8-08	2209-2237 El Camino Real (east corner of El Camino Real and College Ave.)	Various older, underutilized commercial uses
8-10	2305-2333 El Camino Real (east corner of El Camino Real and Cambridge Ave.)	Various older, underutilized commercial uses
8-12	2805-2905 El Camino Real (at Page Mill Rd. and Pepper Ave.)	Mix of underutilized commercial uses
8-13	3001-3017, 3111-3127 El Camino Real (at Olive and Acacia Aves.)	Mix of underutilized comm. uses; vehicle storage
8-14	1515 El Camino Real at Churchill	Medical Office (planned and zoned for housing; RM-15)
8-15	340 Portage Avenue	Fry's site (planned and zoned for housing; RM-30)
9-01	720-738 Colorado St.; 733-737 San Carlos Ct.	Single-family houses
9-04	2605 Middlefield Rd. at Moreno	Former Coop Market
10-01	3864 Middlefield Rd. & 525 E. Charleston	CAR facility
11-03	611 Hansen Way at El Camino Real	Varian
12-02	E. corner El Camino Real and Curtner	Manpower Office; Jiffy Lube; Compadres Restaurant
12-04	3941/3945 El Camino Real	Existing motel
12-05	3981 El Camino Real	Mayflower Motel
12-08	4315-4329 El Camino Real	Palo Alto Bowling Alley (planned and zoned housing; RM-30/RM-15)
12-12	NE corner Maybell & Clemo	Vacant orchard and 4 homes (planned and zoned for housing; RM-40)
12-10	4035-4043 El Camino Way	Existing home/commercial uses
12-13	4101-4121 El Camino Way (east of East Meadow Dr.)	Small shopping center

Site No.	Site Address	Description
12-14	4125-4139 El Camino Way (north of James Rd.)	Small, older commercial uses
12-16	3700 El Camino Real (btwn. Barron Ave. and La Selva)	Mix of vacant and marginal commercial uses
12-18	4200-4232 El Camino Real	Various commercial/office uses
12-19	4085 El Camino Way at West Meadow	Goodwill Store
12-20	3505-3783 El Camino Real	Various underutilized commercial uses
13-01	4111 & 4161 Alma St.	Church and YWCA
13-03	725 San Antonio Rd. & 4151 Middlefield Rd. (Woolworth's Nursery)	Office uses
15-01	687 Arastradero Rd.	Greenhouse, vacant

APPENDIX G

Resource Persons Contacted During Preparation of 1999-2006 Housing Element

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David Baker, Architect
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